

CLARISSA.
OR, THE
HISTORY
OF A
YOUNG LADY:

Comprehending
The most Important Concerns of Private LIFE;
And particularly shewing,
The Distresses that may attend the MISCONDUCT
Both of PARENTS and CHILDREN,
In Relation to MARRIAGE.

IN SEVEN VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

THE FOURTH EDITION.



LONDON:

Printed for S. Richardson:

And Sold by JOHN OSBORN, in *Pater-noster Row*;
By ANDREW MILLAR, over-against *Catbarine-street* in the *Strand*;
By J. and J. RIVINGTON, in *St. Paul's Church-yard*;
And by J. LEAKE, at *Bath*.

M.DCC.LI.

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M.DCC.LII.



THE HISTORY

OF
CLARISSA HARLOWE.

LETTER I.

Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, To Miss HOWE.

Monday Afternoon, March 27.

I HAVE deposited my Narrative down to this day noon; but I hope soon to follow it with another Letter, that I may keep you as little a while as possible in that suspense which I am so much affected by at this moment: For my heart is disturbed at every foot I hear stir; and at every door below that I hear open or shut.

They have been all assembled some time, and are in close debate I believe: But can there be room for long debate upon a proposal, which, if accepted, will so effectually answer all their views?—Can they

VOL. II.

B

insist

insist a moment longer upon my having Mr. Solmes, when they see what sacrifices I am ready to make, to be freed from his addresses?—O but I suppose the struggle is, first, with Bella's nicety, to persuade her to accept of the Estate, and of the Husband; and next, with her pride to take her *Sister's refusals*, as she once phrased it!—Or, it may be, my Brother is insisting upon Equivalents for his reversion in the Estate: And these sort of things take up but too much the attention of some of our family. To these, no-doubt, one or both, it must be owing, that my proposal admits of so much consideration.

I want, methinks, to see, what Mr. Lovelace, in his Letter, says. But I will deny myself *this* piece of curiosity till that which is raised by my present suspense is answered.—Excuse me, my dear, that I thus trouble you with my uncertainties: But I have no employment, nor heart, if I had, to pursue any other but what my pen affords me.

Monday Evening.

WOULD you believe it?—Betty, by anticipation, tells me, that I am to be refused. I am 'a vile, artificial creature. Every-body is too good to me. My 'Uncle Harlowe has been *taken-in*, that's the phrase. 'They knew how it would be, if he either wrote 'to me, or saw me. He has, however, been made 'ashamed to be so wrought upon. A pretty thing 'truly in the eye of the world would it be, were they 'to take me at my word! It would look as if they 'had treated me thus hardly, as *I* think it, for this 'very purpose. My *peculiar*s, particularly Miss 'Howe, would give it that turn; and I myself could 'mean nothing by it, but to see if it would be accepted in order to strengthen my own arguments 'against Mr. Solmes. It was amazing, that it could 'admit

' admit of a moment's deliberation : That any-thing
 ' could be *supposed* to be done in it. It was equally
 ' against Law and Equity : And a fine security Miss
 ' Bella would have, or Mr. Solmes, when I could re-
 ' sume it when I would !—My *Brother* and *She* my
 ' heirs ! O the artful creature !—I to resolve to live
 ' single, when Lovelace is so *sure* of me—and every-
 ' where declares as much !—and can whenever he
 ' pleases, if my Husband, claim under the Will !—
 ' Then the insolence—the confidence—(as Betty
 ' mincingly told me, that *one* said ; you may easily
 ' guess who) that she, who was so justly in disgrace
 ' for downright rebellion, should pretend to prescribe
 ' to the whole family !—should name a Husband for
 ' her elder Sister !—What a triumph would her ob-
 ' stinacy go away with, to delegate her commands,
 ' not as from a Prison, as she called it, but as from
 ' her Throne, to her Elders and Betters ; and to
 ' her Father and Mother too !—Amazing, perfectly
 ' amazing, that any-body could argue upon such a
 ' proposal as this ! It was a master-stroke of *finesse*—
 ' It was ME in perfection—Surely my Uncle Har-
 ' lowe will never again be so taken-in.'

All this was the reader told me, because it was
 against me, and would tease and vex me. But as
 some of this fine recapitulation implied, that some-
 body spoke up for me, I was curious to know who
 it was : But Betty would not tell me, for fear I
 should have the consolation to find that *all* were not
 against me.

But do you not see, my dear, what a sad creature
 she is whom you honour with your friendship ?—You
 could not doubt your influence over me : Why did
 you not let me know myself a little better ?—Why
 did you not take the friendly liberty I have always
 taken with you, and tell me my faults, and what a
 specious hypocrite I am ? For if my Brother and Sister

could make such discoveries, how is it possible, that faults so enormous [You could see *others*, you thought, of a *more secret* nature!] could escape your penetrating eye?

Well, but now, it seems, they are debating how and by whom to answer me: For they know not, nor *are* they to know, that Mrs. Betty has told me all these fine things. One desires to be excused, it seems: Another chuses not to have any-thing to say to me: Another has enough of me: And of writing to so ready a scribbler, there will be no end.

Thus are those imputed qualifications, which used so lately to gain me applause, now become my crimes: So much do disgust and anger alter the property of things.

The result of their debate, I suppose, will somehow or other be communicated to me by-and-by. But let me tell you, my dear, that I am made so desperate, that I am afraid to open Mr. Lovelace's Letter, lest, in the humour I am in, I should do something (if I find it not exceptionable) that may give me repentance as long as I live.

Monday Night.

THIS moment the following Letter is brought me by Betty.

Miss Cunning-ones,

Monday, 5 o'Clock.

YOUR fine new proposal is thought unworthy of a particular Answer. Your Uncle Harlowe is ashamed to be so taken-in. Have you no new fetch for your Uncle Antony? Go round with us, child, now your hand's in. But I was bid to write only one line, that you might not complain, as you did of your worthy Sister, for the freedoms you provoked: It is This;—Prepare yourself. To-morrow

CLARISSA HARLOWE. 5

tomorrow you go to my Uncle Antony's. That's all, child.

JAMES HARLOWE.

I was vexed to the heart at this: And immediately, in the warmth of resentment, wrote the inclosed to my Uncle Harlowe; who it seems stays here this night.

To JOHN HARLOWE, Esq;

Honoured Sir,

Monday Night.

I Find I am a very sad creature, and did not know it. I wrote not to my Brother. To you, Sir, I wrote. From you I hope the honour of an Answer. No one reveres her Uncles more than I do. Nevertheless, I will be bold to say, that the distance, great as it is, between Uncle and Niece, excludes not such a hope: And I think I have not made a proposal that deserves to be treated with scorn.

Forgive me, Sir—My heart is full. Perhaps one day you may think you have been prevailed upon (for that is plainly the case!) to join to treat me—as I do not deserve to be treated. If you are ashamed, as my Brother hints, of having expressed any returning tenderness to me, God help me! I see I have no mercy to expect from any-body! But, Sir, from your pen let me have an Answer; I humbly implore it of you.—Till my Brother can recollect what belongs to a Sister, I will take from him no Answer to the Letter I wrote to you, nor any commands whatever.

I move every-body!—This, Sir, is what you are pleased to mention:—But whom have I moved?—One person in the family has more moving ways than I have, or he could never so undeservedly have made

6 THE HISTORY OF

every body ashamed to shew tenderness to a poor distressed child of the same family.

Return me not this with contempt, or torn, or unanswered, I beseech you. My Father has a title to do that, or any-thing, by his child: But from no other person in the world of your Sex, Sir, ought a young creature of mine (while she preserves a supplicating spirit) to be so treated.

When what I have before written in the humblest strain has met with such strange constructions, I am afraid that this unguarded scrawl will be very ill-received. But I beg, Sir, you will oblige me with one line, be it ever so harsh, in answer to my proposal. I still think it ought to be attended to. I will enter into the most solemn engagements to make it valid by a perpetual Single Life. In a word, any thing I *can* do, I *will* do, to be restored to all your favours. More I cannot say, but that I am, very undeservedly,

A most unhappy Creature.

Betty scrupled again to carry this Letter; and said, she should have anger; and I should but have it returned in scraps and bits.

I must take That chance, said I: I only desire you will deliver it as directed.

Sad doings! very sad! she said, that young Ladies should so violently set themselves against their duty.

I told her, she should have the liberty to say what she pleased, so she would but be my messenger that one time—And down she went with it.

I bid her, if she could, slide it into my Uncle's hand, unseen; at least, unseen by my Brother or Sister, for fear it should meet, thro' *their* good offices, with the fate she had bespoken for it.

She would not undertake for That, she said.

I am

I am now in expectation of the result. But having so little ground to hope for either favour or mercy, I opened Mr. Lovelace's Letter.

I would send it to you, my dear (as well as those I shall inclose) by this conveyance; but not being able at present to determine in what manner I shall answer it, I will give myself the trouble of abstracting it here, while I am waiting for what may offer from the Letter just carried down.

He laments, as usual, my ill opinion of him, and readiness to believe every thing to his disadvantage. He puts into plain English, as I supposed he would, my hint, that I might be happier, if, by any rashness he might be guilty of to Solmes, he should come to an untimely end himself.

He is concerned, he says, 'That the violence he had expressed on his extreme apprehensiveness of losing me, should have made him guilty of anything I had so much reason to resent.'

He owns, 'That he is passionate: All good-natured men, he says, are so; and a sincere man cannot hide it.' But appeals to me, 'Whether, if any occasion in the word could excuse the rashness of his expressions, it would not be his present dreadful situation, thro' my indifference, and the malice of his enemies.'

He says, 'He has more reason than ever, from the contents of my last, to apprehend, that I shall be prevailed upon by force, if not by fair means, to fall in with my Brother's measures; and sees but too plainly, that I am preparing him to expect it.'

Upon this presumption, he supplicates, with the utmost earnestness, that I will not give way to the malice of his enemies.

Solemn vows of reformation, and everlasting truth and obligingness, he makes; all in the style of desponding humility: Yet calls it a cruel turn

‘ upon him, to impute his protestations to a consciousness of the necessity there is for making them from his bad character.

‘ He despises himself, he solemnly protests, for his past follies: He thanks God he has seen his error; and nothing but my more particular instructions, are wanting to perfect his reformation.

‘ He promises, that he will do every-thing that I shall think he can do with honour, to bring about a Reconciliation with my Father; and even will, if I insist upon it, make the first overtures to my Brother, and treat him as his own Brother, because he is mine, if he will not by new affronts revive the remembrance of the past.

‘ He begs, in the most earnest and humble manner, for one half-hour’s interview; undertaking by a key, which he owns he has to the garden-door, leading into the *Coppice*, as we call it. (if I will but unbolt the door) to come into the garden at night, and wait till I have an opportunity to come to him, that he may re-assure me of the truth of all he writes, and of the affection, and, if needful, protection, of all his family.

‘ He presumes not, he says, to write by way of menace to me; but, if I refuse him this favour, he knows not (so desperate have some strokes in my Letter made him) what his despair may make him do.’

He asks me, ‘ Determined, as my friends are, and far as they have already gone, and declare they will go, what I can propose to do, to avoid having Mr. Solmes, if I am carried to my Uncle Antony’s; unless I resolve to accept of the protection he has offered to procure me; or except I will escape to London, or elsewhere, while I *can* escape?’

He advises me, ‘ To sue to *your* Mother, for her private reception of me; only till I can obtain possession

‘ session of my own Estate, and procure my friends
 ‘ to be reconciled to me ; which he is sure they will
 ‘ be desirous to *be*, the moment I am out of their
 ‘ power.’

He apprises me [It is still my wonder, how he comes by his intelligence!] ‘ That my friends have
 ‘ written to my Cousin Morden to represent matters
 ‘ to him in their own partial way ; nor doubt they
 ‘ to influence him on their side of the question.

‘ That all this shews I have but *one* way ; if none
 ‘ of my own friends or intimates will receive me.

‘ If I will transport him with the honour of my
 ‘ choice of this *one* way, Settlements shall be drawn,
 ‘ with proper blanks, which I shall fill up as I please.
 ‘ Let him but have my commands from my own
 ‘ mouth ; all my doubts and scruples from my own
 ‘ lips ; and only a repetition, that I will not, on any
 ‘ consideration, be Solmes’s Wife ; and he shall be
 ‘ easy. But, after such a Letter as I have written,
 ‘ nothing but an Interview can make him so.’ He
 beseeches me therefore, ‘ To unbolt the door, *as*
 ‘ *that very night* ; or, if I receive not this time
 ‘ enough, *this night* ;—and he will in a disguise
 ‘ that shall not give a suspicion who he is, if he
 ‘ should be seen, come to the garden-door, in hopes
 ‘ to open it with his key ; nor will he have any other
 ‘ lodging than in the Coppice both nights : watching
 ‘ every wakeful hour for the propitious unbolting,
 ‘ unless he has a Letter with my orders to the con-
 ‘ trary, or to make some other appointment.’

This Letter was dated yesterday : So he was there
 last night, I suppose ; and will be there this night ; and
 I have not written a line to him : And now it is too
 late, were I determined *what* to write.

I hope he will not go to Mr. Solmes.—I hope he
 will not come hither.—If he do either, I will break
 with him for ever,

What

What have I to do with such headstrong spirits? I wish I had never—But what signifies wishing?—I am strangely perplexed—But I need not have told you this, after such a representation of my situation.

LETTER II.

Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, To Miss HOWE.

Tuesday Morning, 7 o' Clock.

MY Uncle has vouchsafed to answer me. These that follow are the contents of his Letter; but just now brought me, altho' written last night—Late, I suppose.

Miss Clary,

Monday Night.

SINCE you are grown such a bold challenger, and teach us all our duty, tho' you will not practise your own, I *must* answer you. No-body wants your Estate from you. Are *you*, who refuse every-body's advice, to prescribe a Husband to your *Sister*? Your Letter to Mr. Solmes is inexcusable. I blamed you for it before. Your Parents *will* be obeyed. It is fit they *should*. Your Mother has nevertheless prevailed to have your going to your Uncle Antony's put off till Thursday: Yet owns you deserve not that, or any other favour from her. I will receive no more of your Letters. You are too artful for me. You are an ingrateful and unreasonable child: Must you have your will paramount to every-body's? How are you altered!

Your displeased Uncle,

JOHN HARLOWE.

To be carried away on Thursday—To the moated House—To the Chapel—To Solmes! How can I think of this!—They will make me desperate.

Tuesday

CLARISSA HARLOWE. 11

Tuesday Morning, Eight o' Clock.

I HAVE another Letter from Mr. Lovelace. I opened it with the expectation of its being filled with bold and free complaints, on my not writing to prevent his two nights watching, in weather not extremely agreeable. But, instead of complaints, he is full of tender concern lest I may have been prevented by indisposition, or by the closer confinement which he has frequently cautioned me that I may expect.

He says, 'He had been in different disguises loitering about our garden and park-wall, all the day on Sunday last; and all Sunday-night was wandering about the coppice, and near the back-door. It rained; and he has got a great cold, attended with feverishness, and so hoarse, that he has almost lost his voice.'

Why did he not flame out in his Letter?—Treated as I am treated by my friends, it is dangerous for me to lie under the sense of an obligation to any one's patience, when that person suffers in health for my sake.

'He had no shelter, he says, but under the great overgrown Ivy, which spreads wildly round the heads of two or three Oaklings; and that was soon wet through.'

You remember the spot. You and I, my dear, once thought ourselves obliged to the natural shade which those Ivy-cover'd Oaklings afforded us, in a sultry day.

I can't help saying, I am sorry he has suffered for my sake.—But 'tis his own seeking.

His Letter is dated last night at Eight: 'And indisposed as he is, he tells me, That he will watch till Ten, in hopes of my giving him the meeting he so earnestly requests. And after that, he has a mile to walk to his horse and servant; and four miles then to ride to his Inn.'

He

He owns, ' That he has an intelligencer in our family ; who has failed him for a day or two past : And not knowing how I do, or how I may be treated, his anxiety is increased.'

This circumstance gives me to guess who this intelligencer is : Joseph Leman : The very creature employed and confided in, more than any other, by my Brother.

This is not an honourable way of proceeding in Mr. Lovelace. Did he learn this infamous practice of corrupting the servants or other families at the French Court, where he resided a good while?

I have been often jealous of this Leman in my little airings and poultry visits. Doubly obsequious as he was always to me, I have thought him my Brother's Spy upon me ; and altho' he obliged me by his hastening out of the garden, and poultry-yard, whenever I came into either, have wondered, that from *his reports* my liberties of those kinds have not been abridged (a). So, possibly, this man may be bribed by both, and yet betray both. Worthy views want not such obliquities as these on either side. An honest mind must rise into indignation both at the traitor-maker and the traitor.

He presses with the utmost earnestness for an Interview. He would not presume, he says, to disobey my last personal commands, that he should not endeavour to attend me again in the wood-house. But says, he can give me such reasons for my permitting him to wait upon my Father or Uncles, as he hopes will be approved by me : For he cannot help observing, that it is no more suitable to my own spirit than to his, that he, a man of fortune and family, should be obliged to pursue such a clandestine address, as would only become a vile fortune-hunter. But, if I will give my con-

(a) Mr. Lovelace accounts for this, Vol. I. Letter xxxv.

‘ sent for his visiting me like a man, and a gentleman, no ill-treatment shall provoke him to forfeit his temper.

‘ Lord M. will accompany him, if I please : Or Lady Betty Lawrance will first make the visit to my Mother, or to my Aunt Hervey, or even to my Uncles, if I chuse it. And such terms shall be offered, as *shall* have weight upon them.

‘ He begs, that I will not deny him making a visit to Mr. Solmes. By all that’s good, he vows, that it shall not be with the least intention either to hurt or affront him ; but only to set before him, calmly and rationally, the consequences that may possibly flow from so fruitless a perseverance, as well as the ungenerous folly of it, to a mind so noble as mine. He repeats his own resolution to attend my pleasure, and Mr. Morden’s arrival and advice, for the reward of his own patience.

‘ It is impossible, he says, but one of these methods *must* do. Presence, he observes, even of a disliked person, takes off the edge from resentments which absence whets, and makes keen.

‘ He therefore most earnestly repeats his importunities for the supplicated Interview.’ He says, ‘ He has business of consequence in London : But cannot stir from the inconvenient spot where he has for some time resided, in disguises unworthy of himself, until he can be absolutely certain, that I shall not be prevailed upon, either by force or otherwise ; and until he finds me delivered from the insults of my Brother. Nor ought This to be an indifferent point to one, for whose sake all the world reports me to be used unworthily.—But *one* remark, he says, he cannot help making ; That did my friends know the little favour I shew him, and the very great distance I keep him at, they would have no reason to confine me on his account :

‘ And

‘ And *another*, that they *themselves* seem to think
 ‘ him intitled to a different usage, and expect that
 ‘ he receives it; when, in truth, what he meets
 ‘ with from me is exactly what they wish him to
 ‘ meet with, excepting in the favour of the corre-
 ‘ spondence I honour him with; upon which, he says,
 ‘ he puts the highest value, and for the sake of
 ‘ which he has submitted to a thousand indignities.

‘ He renews his professions of reformation: He
 ‘ is convinced, he says, that he has already run a
 ‘ long and dangerous course; and that it is high
 ‘ time to think of returning: It *must be* from proper
 ‘ convictions, he says, that a person who has lived
 ‘ too gay a life, resolves to reclaim before age or
 ‘ sufferings come upon him.

‘ All generous spirits, he observes, hate compul-
 ‘ sion. Upon this observation he dwells; but regrets,
 ‘ that he is likely to owe all his hopes to this com-
 ‘ pulsion; this *injudicious* compulsion, he justly calls
 ‘ it; and none to my esteem for him. Altho’ he
 ‘ presumes upon some merit—In his implicit regard
 ‘ to my will—In the bearing the daily indignities
 ‘ offered not only to him, but to his relations, by
 ‘ my Brother—In the nightly watchings, and risques
 ‘ which he runs, in all weathers; and which his pre-
 ‘ sent indisposition makes him mention, or he had
 ‘ not debased the nobleness of his passion for me, by
 ‘ such a selfish instance.’

I cannot but say, I am sorry the man is not well.

I am afraid to ask you, my dear, what *you* would
 have done, thus situated. But what I *have* done, I
 have done. In a word, I wrote, ‘ That I would,
 ‘ if possible, give him a meeting to-morrow night,
 ‘ between the hours of Nine and Twelve, by the Ivy
 ‘ Summer-house, or in it, or near the great Cascade,
 ‘ at the bottom of the garden; and would unbolt
 ‘ the door, that he might come in by his own key.

‘ But

CLARISSA HARLOWE. 15

‘ But that, if I found the meeting impracticable, or
‘ should change my mind, I would signify as much
‘ by another line; which he must wait for until it
‘ were dark.’

Tuesday, Eleven o’ Clock.

I AM just returned from depositing my billet. How diligent is this man! It is plain he was in waiting: For I had walk’d but a few paces, after I had deposited it, when, my heart misgiving me, I returned, to have taken it back, in order to reconsider it as I walked, and whether I should, or should not, let it go. But I found it gone.

In all probability, there was but a brick wall, of a few inches thick, between Mr. Lovelace and me, at the very time I put the Letter under the brick!

I am come back dissatisfied with myself. But I think, my dear, there can be no harm in meeting him. If I do *not*, he may take some violent measures. What he knows of the treatment I meet with in malice to him, and with a view to frustrate all his hopes, may make him desperate. His behaviour last time I saw him, under the disadvantages of time and place, and surpris’d as I was, gives me no apprehension of any thing but discovery. What he requires is not unreasonable, and cannot affect my future choice and determination: It is only to assure him from my own lips, that I will never be the Wife of a man I hate. If I have not an opportunity to meet without hazard or detection, he must once more bear the disappointment. All his trouble, and mine too, is owing to his faulty character. This, altho’ I hate tyranny and arrogance in all shapes, makes me think less of the risques he runs, and the fatigues he undergoes, than otherwise I should do; and still less, as my sufferings (derived from the same source) are greater than his.

Betty confirms the intimation, that I must go to my Uncle’s on Thursday. She was sent on purpose to

to direct me to prepare myself for going, and to help me to get up every thing in order for my removal.

LETTER III.

Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, To Miss HOWE.

Tuesday, Three o' Clock, March 28.

I HAVE mentioned several times the pertness of Mrs. Betty to me; and now, having a little time upon my hands, I will give you a short dialogue that passed just now between us. It may, perhaps, be a little relief to you from the dull subjects with which I am perpetually teasing you.

As she attended me at dinner, she took notice, That Nature is satisfied with a very little nourishment: And thus she complimentally proved it:—For, Miss, said she, you eat nothing; yet never looked more charmingly in your life.

As to the former part of your speech, Betty, said I, you observe well; and I have often thought, when I have seen how healthy the children of the labouring Poor *look*, and *are*, with empty stomachs, and hardly a good meal in a week, that God Almighty is very kind to His creatures, in this respect, as well as in all others, in making *Much* not necessary to the support of life; when three parts in four of His creatures, if it were, would not know how to obtain it. It puts me in mind of two proverbial sentences, which are full of admirable meaning.

What, pray, Miss, are they? I love to hear you talk, when you are so sedate as you seem now to be.

The one is to the purpose we are speaking of; *Poverty is the mother of health*: And, let me tell you, Betty, if I had a better appetite, and were to encourage it, with so little rest, and so much distress and persecution, I don't think I should be able to preserve my reason.

There's

There's no inconvenience but has its convenience, said Betty, giving me proverb for proverb. But what is the other, Madam?

That the *pleasures of the mighty are obtained by the tears of the poor*: It is but reasonable therefore, methinks, that the plenty of the one should be followed by distempers; and that the indigence of the other should be attended with that health, which makes all its other discomforts light on the comparison. And hence a third proverb, Betty, since you are an admirer of proverbs; *Better a bare foot, than none at all*; that is to say, than not to be able to walk.

She was mightily taken with what I said: See, returned she, what a fine thing scholarship is!— I, said she, had always, from a girl, a taste for reading, tho' it were but in *Mother Goose*, and concerning the *Fairies* [And then she took genteely a pinch of snuff]: Could but my parents *have let go as fast as I pulled*, I should have been a very happy creature.

Very likely, you would have made great improvements, Betty: But as it is, I cannot say, but since I had the favour of your attendance in this *intimate* manner, I have heard smarter things from you, than I have heard at table from some of my Brother's Fellow-collegians.

Your servant, dear Miss; dropping me one of her best courtesies: So fine a judge as you are!— It is enough to make one very proud. Then, with another pinch—I cannot indeed but say, bridling upon it, that I have heard famous scholars often and often say very silly things: Things I should be ashamed myself to say— But I thought they did it out of humility, and in condescension to those who had not their learning.

That she might not be *too* proud, I told her, I would observe, that the liveliness or quickness she so happily discovered in herself, was not so much an

honour to her, as what she owed to her *Sex*; which, as I had observed in many instances, had great advantages over the other, in all the powers that related to imagination: And hence, Mrs. Betty, you'll take notice, as I have of late had opportunity to do, that your own talent at repartee and smartness, when it has *something to work upon*, displays itself to more advantage, than could well be expected from one whose friends, to speak in your own phrase, could not *let go so fast as you pulled*.

The wench gave me a proof of the truth of my observation, in a manner still more alert than I had expected: If, said she, our *Sex* have so much advantage in *smartness*, it is the less to be wondered at, that *you*, Miss, who have had such an education, should outdo all the men, and *women* too, that come near you.

Bless me, Betty, said I, what a proof do you give me of your wit and your courage at the same time! This is outdoing yourself. It would make young Ladies less proud, and more apprehensive, were they generally attended by such smart servants, and their mouths permitted to be unlocked upon them as yours has lately been upon me.—But, take away, Mrs. Betty.

Why, Miss, you have eat nothing at all—I hope you are not displeased with your dinner for any thing I have said.

No, Mrs. Betty, I am pretty well used to your freedoms, now, you know.—I am not displeased in the main, to observe, that, were the succession of modern fine Ladies to be extinct, it might be supplied from those whom they place in the next rank to themselves, their chambermaids and confidants. Your young Mistress has contributed a great deal to this quickness of yours. She always preferred your company to mine. As *you pulled, she let go*; and so,

Mrs.

Mrs. Betty, you have gained by *her* conversation what I have lost.

Why, Miss, if you come to that, no-body says better things than Miss Harlowe. I could tell you one, if *I pleased*, upon my observing to her, that you lived of late upon air, and had no stomach to anything; yet looked as charmingly as ever.

I dare say, it was a very good-natured one, Mrs. Betty!—Do you then *please* that I shall hear it?

Only this, Miss, *That your stomachfulness had swallowed up your stomach*; and, *That obstinacy was meat, drink, and cloth to you*.

Ay, Mrs. Betty; and *did she say This?*—I hope she laughed when she said it, as she does at all her *good things*, as she calls them. It was very smart, and very witty. I wish my mind were so much at ease, as to aim at being witty too. But if you admire such sententious sayings, I'll help you to another; and that is, *Encouragement and Approbation make people shew talents they were never suspected to have*; and This will do both for mistress and maid: And another I'll furnish you with, the contrary of the former, that will do only for me; *That Persecution and Discouragement depress ingenuous minds, and blunt the edge of lively imaginations*.—And hence may my *Sister's* Brilliancy and my Stupidity be both accounted for. *Ingenuous*, you must know, Mrs. Betty, and *ingenious*, are two things; and I would not arrogate the latter to myself.

Lord, Miss, said the Foolish, you know a great deal for your years.—You are a very learned young Lady!—What pity—

None of your *pities*, Mrs. Betty. I know what you'd say. But tell me, if you can, Is it resolved that I shall be carried to my Uncle Antony's on Thursday?

I was willing to reward myself for the patience she had made me exercise, by getting at what intelligence I could from her.

Why, Miss, seating herself at a little distance (Excuse my sitting down) with the snuff-box tapped very smartly, the lid opened, and a pinch taken with a dainty finger and thumb, the other three fingers distendedly bent, and with a fine flourish— I cannot but say, that it is my opinion, you will certainly go on Thursday; and this *noless solefs*, as I have heard my young Lady say in FRENCH.

Whether I am *willing* or *not willing*, you mean, I suppose, Mrs. Betty?

You have it, Miss.

Well but, Betty, I have no mind to be turned out of doors so suddenly. Do you think I could not be permitted to tarry one week longer?

How can I tell, Miss!

O Mrs. Betty, you can tell a great deal, if *you please*. But here I am forbid writing to any one of my family; none of it now will come near *me*; nor will any of it permit me to see *them*: How shall I do to make known my request, to stay here a week or fortnight longer?

Why, Miss, I fancy, if you were to shew a compliant temper, your friends would shew a compliant one too. But would you expect favours, and grant none?

Smartly put, Betty! But who knows what may be the result of my being carried to my Uncle Antony's?

Who knows, Miss!— Why any-body will guess what may be the result.

As how, Betty?

As how! repeated the pert wench, Why, Miss, you will stand in your own light, as you have hitherto

to done: And your parents, as such good parents *ought*, will be obeyed.

If, Mrs. Betty, I had not been used to your *oughts*, and to have my duty laid down to me by your oraculous wisdom, I should be apt to stare at the liberty of your speech.

You seem angry, Miss. I hope I take no unbecoming liberty.

If thou really think'st thou dost not, thy ignorance is more to be pitied, than thy pertness resented. I wish thou wouldst leave me to myself.

When young Ladies fall out with their *own* duty, it is not much to be wondered at, that they are angry at any-body who do *theirs*.

That's a very pretty saying, Mrs. Betty!— I see plainly what *thy* duty is in *thy* notion, and am obliged to those who taught it thee.

Every-body takes notice, Miss, that you can say very cutting words in a cool manner, and yet not call names, as I have known *some* gentlefolks as well as others do when in a passion. But I wish you had permitted 'Squire Solmes to see you: He would have told you such Stories of 'Squire Lovelace, as would have turned your heart against him for ever.

And know you any of the particulars of those sad Stories?

Indeed I don't; but you'll hear all at your Uncle Antony's, I suppose; and a great deal more perhaps than you will like to hear.

Let me hear what I will, I am determined against Mr. Solmes, were it to cost me my life.

If you are, Miss, the Lord have mercy on you! For what with this Letter of yours to 'Squire Solmes, whom they so much value, and what with their antipathy to 'Squire Lovelace, whom they hate, they will have no patience with you.

What will they do, Betty? They won't kill me? What *will* they do?

Kill you! No!—But you will not be suffered to stir from thence, till you have complied with your duty. And *no pen and ink* will be allowed you as here; where they are of opinion you make no good use of it: Nor would it be allowed here, only as they intend so soon to send you away to your Uncle's. No-body will be permitted to see you, or to correspond with you. What farther will be done, I can't say; and, if I could, it may not be proper. But you may prevent it all, by One word: And I wish you would, Miss. All then would be easy and happy. And, if I may speak my mind, I see not why one man is not as good as another: Why, especially, a sober man is not as good as a Rake.

Well, Betty, said I, sighing, all thy impertinence goes for nothing. But I see I am destined to be a very unhappy creature. Yet will I venture upon one request more to them.

And so, quite sick of the pert creature, and of myself, I retired to my closet, and wrote a few lines to my Uncle Harlowe, notwithstanding his prohibition; in order to get a reprieve from being carried away so soon as Thursday next, if I must go. And This, that I might, if complied with, suspend the appointment I have made with Mr. Lovelace; for my heart misgives me as to meeting him; and that more and more; I know not why. Under the superscription of the Letter, I wrote these words: 'Pray, dear Sir, be pleased to give This a reading.'

This is the copy of what I wrote:

Honoured

*Honoured Sir,**Tuesday Afternoon.*

LET me this once be heard with patience, and have my petition granted. It is only, that I may not be hurried away so soon as next Thursday.

Why should the poor girl be turned out of doors so suddenly, so disgracefully? Procure for me, Sir, one fortnight's respite. In that space of time, I hope you will all relent. My Mamma shall not need to shut her door in apprehension of seeing her disgraced child. I will not presume to think of entering her presence, or my Papa's, without leave. One fortnight's respite is but a *small favour* for them to grant, except I am to be refused every-thing I ask; but it is of the *biggest import* to my peace of mind. Procure it for me, therefore, dear Sir; and you will exceedingly oblige

Your dutiful, tho' greatly afflicted Niece,

CL. HARLOWE.

I sent this down: My Uncle was not gone: And he now stays to know the result of the question put to me in the inclosed Answer which he has given to mine.

YOUR going to your Uncle's was absolutely concluded upon for next Thursday. Nevertheless, your Mother, seconded by Mr. Solmes, pleaded so strongly to have you indulged, that your request for a delay will be complied with, upon one condition; and whether for a fortnight, or a shorter time, that will depend upon yourself. If you refuse this condition, your Mother declares, she will give over all further intercession for you.—Nor do you

deserve this favour, as you put it upon our yielding to you, not you to us.

This condition is, That you admit of a visit from Mr. Solmes, for one hour, in company of your Brother, your Sister, or your Uncle Antony, chuse which you will.

If you comply not, you go next Thursday to a house which is become strangely odious to you of late, whether you get ready to go, or not. Answer therefore directly to the point. No evasion. Name your day and hour. Mr. Solmes will neither eat you, nor drink you. Let us see, whether *we* are to be complied with *in any-thing*, or not.

JOHN HARLOWE.

After a very little deliberation, I resolved to comply with this condition. All I fear is, that Mr. Lovelace's intelligencer may inform him of it; and that his apprehensions upon it may make him take some desperate resolution: Especially as now (having more time given me here) I think to write to him to suspend the Interview he is possibly so sure of. I sent down the following to my Uncle:

Honoured Sir,

ALtho' I see not what end the proposed condition can answer, I comply with it. I wish I could with every-thing expected of me. If I must name one, in whose company I am to see the gentleman, and that one *not* my Mamma, whose presence I could wish to be honoured by on the occasion, let my Uncle, if he pleases, be the *Person*. If I must name the *Day* (a long day, I doubt, will not be permitted me) let it be next Tuesday. The *Hour*, Four in the afternoon. The *Place* either the Ivy Summer-

CLARISSA HARLOWE. 25

Summer-house, or in the little parlour I used to be permitted to call mine.

Be pleased, Sir, nevertheless, to prevail upon my Mamma to vouchsafe me her presence on the occasion. I am, Sir,

Your ever-dutiful

CL. HARLOWE.

A Reply is just sent me. I thought it became my averseness to this meeting, to name a distant day: But I did not expect they would have complied with it. So here is one week gained!

This is the Reply:

YOU have done well to comply. We are willing to think the best of every slight instance of duty from you. Yet have you seemed to consider the day as an evil day, and so put it far off. This nevertheless is granted you, as no time need to be lost, if you are as generous *after* the day, as we are condescending *before* it. Let me advise you, not to harden your mind; nor take up your resolution beforehand. Mr. Solmes has more awe, and even terror, at the thoughts of seeing you, than you can have at the thoughts of seeing him. *His* motive is *Love*; let not yours be *Hatred*. My Brother Antony will be present, in hopes you will deserve well of *him*, by behaving well to the friend of the family. See you use him as such. Your Mother had permission to be there, if she thought fit: But says, she would not for a thousand pounds, unless you would encourage her beforehand as she wishes to be encouraged. One hint I am to give you mean time. It is this: *To make a discreet use of your pen and ink*. Methinks a young creature of niceness should be less ready to write to one man, when she is designed to be another's.

This

This compliance, I hope, will produce greater ;
and then the peace of the family will be restored :
Which is what is heartily wished by

Your loving Uncle,

JOHN HARLOWE.

Unless it be to the purpose our hearts are set upon,
you need not write again.

This man have *more terror at seeing me, than I
can have at seeing him!*—How can that be? If he
had half as much, he would not wish to see me!—
His *motive Love!*—Yes indeed! Love of himself!
He knows no other; for Love, that deserves the
name, seeks the satisfaction of the beloved object
more than its own.—Weighed in this scale, what a
profanation is this man guilty of!

Not to take up my resolution beforehand!—That
advice comes too late.

But I must *make a discreet use of my pen.* That,
I doubt, as they have managed it, in the sense they
mean it, is as much out of my power, as the other.

*But to write to one man, when I am designed for
another!* What a shocking expression is That!

Repenting of my appointment with Mr. Lovelace
before I had this favour granted me, you may be-
lieve I hesitated not a moment to revoke it *now* that
I had gained such a respite. Accordingly, I wrote,
‘ That I found it inconvenient to meet him, as I had
‘ intended: That the risque I should run of a disco-
‘ very, and the mischiefs that might flow from it,
‘ could not be justified by any end that such a meet-
‘ ing could answer: That I found one certain ser-
‘ vant more in my way, when I took my morning
‘ and evening airings, than any other: That the
‘ person who might reveal the secrets of a family to
‘ *him*, might, if opportunity were given him, be-
‘ tray

' tray me, or him, to those whom it was his duty to
 ' serve : That I had not been used to a conduct so
 ' faulty, as to lay myself at the mercy of servants :
 ' And was sorry he had measures to pursue, that
 ' made steps necessary in his own opinion, which,
 ' in mine, were very culpable, and which no end
 ' could justify : That things drawing towards a cri-
 ' sis between my friends and me, an Interview could
 ' avail nothing ; especially as the method by which
 ' this correspondence was carried on, was not suspect-
 ' ed, and he could write all that was in his mind to
 ' write : That I expected to be at liberty to judge
 ' of what was proper and fit upon this occasion :
 ' Especially as he might be assured, that I would
 ' sooner chuse death, than Mr. Solmes.'

Tuesday Night.

I HAVE deposited my Letter to Mr. Lovelace.
 Threatening as things look against me, I am much
 better pleased with myself for declining the Inter-
 view than I was before. I suppose he will be a little
 out of humour upon it, however : But as I reserved
 to myself the liberty of changing my mind ; and as
 it is easy for him to imagine there may be reasons for
 it *within-doors*, which he cannot judge of *without* ;
 besides those I have suggested, which of themselves
 are of sufficient weight to engage his acquiescence ; I
 should think it strange, if he acquiesces not on this
 occasion, and that with a cheerfulness, which may
 shew me, that his last Letter is written from his heart :
 For if he be really so much concerned at his past
 faults, as he pretends, and has for some time pre-
 tended, must he not, of course, have corrected, in
 some degree, the impetuosity of his temper ? The
 first step to reformation, as I conceive, is to subdue
 sudden gusts of passion, from which frequently the
 greatest evils arise, and to learn to bear disappoint-
 ments.

ments. If the irascible passions cannot be overcome, what opinion can we have of the person's power over those to which bad habit, joined to *greater* temptation, gives stronger force?

Pray, my dear, be so kind, as to make inquiry by some safe hand, after the disguises Mr. Lovelace assumes at the Inn he puts up at in the poor village of *Neale*, he calls it. If it be the same I take it to be, I never knew it was considerable enough to have a name; nor that it has an Inn in it.

As he must, to be so constantly near us, be much there, I would be glad to have some account of his behaviour; and what the people think of him. In such a length of time, he must by his conduct either give scandal, or hope of reformation. Pray, my dear, humour me in this inquiry. I have reasons for it, which you shall be acquainted with another time, if the result of the inquiry discover them not.

L E T T E R IV.

Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, To Miss HOWE.

Wednesday Morning, Nine o' clock.

I AM just returned from my morning walk, and already have received a Letter from Mr. Lovelace in answer to mine deposited last night. He must have had pen, ink, and paper, with him; for it was written in the coppice; with this circumstance; On one knee, kneeling with the other. *Not* from reverence to the written to, however, as you'll find!

Well are we instructed early to keep these men at distance. An undesigning open heart, where it is loth to disoblige, is easily drawn in, I see, to oblige more than ever it designed. It is too apt to govern itself by what a bold spirit is encouraged to *expect* of it. It is very difficult for a good-natured young person to give a negative where it disesteems not.

Our

Our hearts may harden and contract, as we gain experience, and when we have smarted perhaps for our easy folly : And so they *ought*, or we should be upon very unequal terms with the world.

Excuse these grave reflections. This man has vexed me heartily. I see his gentleness was *Art* : Fierceness, and a temper like what I have been too much used to at home, are *Nature* in him. Nothing, I think, shall ever make me forgive him ; for surely, there can be no good reason for his impatience on an expectation given with reserve, and revocable.—*I* so much to suffer *thro'* him ; yet, to be treated as if I were obliged to bear insults *from* him !—

But here you will be pleased to read his Letter ; which I shall inclose.

To Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Good God !

WHAT is *now* to become of me !—How shall I support this disappointment !—No new cause !—On one knee, kneeling with the other, I write !—My feet benumbed with midnight wanderings thro' the heaviest dews, that ever fell : My wig and my linen dripping with the hoar-frost dissolving on them !—Day but just breaking—Sun not risen to exhale—May it never rise again !—Unless it bring healing and comfort to a benighted soul ! In proportion to the joy you had inspired (ever lovely promiser !) in such proportion is my anguish !

O my beloved creature !—But are not your very excuses confessions of excuses inexcusable ? I know not what I write !—*That* servant in your way (a) ! By the great God of heaven, that servant *was not*, *dared not*, *could not* be in your way !—Curse upon the cool caution that is pleaded to deprive me of an expectation so transporting !

(a) See p. 26.

And

And *are things drawing towards a crisis between your friends and you?*—Is not this a reason for me to expect, the *rather* to expect, the promised Interview?

CAN I write all that is in my mind, say you?—Impossible!—Not the hundredth part of what is in my mind, and in my apprehension, can I write!

O the wavering, the changeable Sex!—But can Miss Clarissa Harlowe—

Forgive me, Madam!—I know not what I write!

Yet, I must, I do, insist upon your promise—Or that you will condescend to find better excuses for the failure—Or convince me, that stronger reasons are imposed upon you, than those you offer.—A promise *once* given (upon *deliberation* given) the *promised* only can dispense with;—except in cases of a very apparent necessity imposed upon the *promiser*, which leaves no power to perform it.

The first promise you ever made me! Life and Death perhaps depending upon it—My heart desponding from the barbarous methods resolved to be taken with you in malice to me!

You would sooner chuse death than Solmes (How my Soul spurns the competition!) O my beloved creature, what are these but *words*!—*Whose* words?—Sweet and ever-adorable—What?—Promise-breaker—must I call you?—How shall I believe the asseveration (your *supposed duty* in the question! Persecution so flaming! Hatred to me so strongly avowed!) after this instance of your so lightly dispensing with your promise?

(If, my dearest Life! you would prevent my distraction, or, at least, distracted consequences, renew the promised hope!—My *fate* is indeed upon its crisis.

Forgive me, dearest creature, forgive me!—I know I have written in too much anguish of mind!

—Writing this, in the same moment that the just-dawning light has imparted to me the heavy disappointment.

I dare not re-peruse what I have written.—I *must* deposit it—It may serve to shew you my distracted apprehension that This disappointment is but a prelude to the greatest of All.—Nor, having here any other paper, am I able to write again if I would on this gloomy spot (Gloomy is my Soul; and all Nature round me partakes of my gloom!)—I trust it therefore to your goodness—If its fervor excite your displeasure rather than your pity, you wrong my passion; and I shall be ready to apprehend, that I am intended to be the sacrifice of more miscreants than one! [Have patience with me, dearest creature!—I mean Solmes and your Brother only]. But if, exerting your usual generosity, you will excuse and *re-appoint*, may That God, whom you profess to serve, and who is the God of *Truth* and of *Promises*, protect and bless you, for both; and for restoring to Himself, and to Hope,

Ivy-Cavern in the
Coppice--Day but
just breaking.

Your ever-adoring,
yet almost desponding

LOVELACE!

This is the Answer I shall return.

Wednesday Morning.

I AM amazed, Sir, at the freedom of your reproaches. Pressed and teased, against convenience and inclination, to give you a private meeting, am I to be thus challenged and upbraided, and my Sex reflected upon, because I thought it prudent to change my mind?—A liberty I had reserved to myself, when I made the *appointment*, as you call it. I wanted not instances of your impatient spirit to other people:
Yet

yet may it be happy for me, that I have this new one; which shews, that you can as little spare *me*, when I pursue the dictates of my own reason, as you do *others*, for acting up to theirs. Two motives you must be governed by in this excess. The one *my easiness*; the other *your own presumption*. Since you think you have found out the *first*, and have shewn so much of the *last* upon it, I am too much alarmed, not to wish and desire, that your Letter of this day may conclude all the trouble you have had from, or for,

Your humble Servant,

CL. HARLOWE.

I believe my dear, I may promise myself your approbation, whenever I write or speak with spirit, be it to whom it will. Indeed, I find but too much reason to exert it, since I have to deal with people, who govern themselves in their conduct to me, not by what is fit or decent, right or wrong, but by what they think my temper will bear. I have, till very lately, been praised for mine; but it has always been by those who never gave me opportunity to return the compliment to them: Some people have acted, as if they thought forbearance on *one side* absolutely necessary for them and me to be upon good terms together; and in this case have ever taken care rather to *owe* that obligation than to *lay* it. You have hinted to me, that resentment is not natural to my temper, and that therefore it must soon subside: It may be so with respect to my Relations; but not to Mr. Lovelace, I assure you.

Wednesday Noon, March 29.

WE cannot always answer for what we *can* do: But to convince you, that I can keep my above resolution, with regard to Mr. Lovelace, angry as my Letter is, and three hours as it is since it was written,

I assure you, that I repent it not, nor will soften it, altho' I find it is not taken away. And yet I hardly ever before did any thing in anger, that I did not repent in half an hour; and question myself in *less* than that time, whether I were right or wrong.

In this respite till Tuesday, I have a little time to look about me, as I may say, and to consider of what I *have* to do, and *can* do. And Mr. Lovelace's insolence will make me go very home with myself. Not that I think I can conquer my aversion to Mr. Solmes. I am sure I cannot. But, if I absolutely break with Mr. Lovelace, and give my friends convincing proofs of it, who knows but they will restore me to their favour, and let their views in relation to the other man go off by degrees?—Or, at least, that I may be safe till my Cousin Morden arrives: To whom, I think, I will write; and the rather, as Mr. Lovelace has assured me, that my friends have written to him to make good their side of the question.

But, with all my courage, I am exceedingly apprehensive about the Tuesday next, and about what may result from my steadfastness; for steadfast I am sure I shall be. They are resolved, I am told, to try every means to induce me to comply with what they are determined upon. I am resolved to do the like, to avoid what they would force me to do. A dreadful contention between Parents and Child!—Each hoping to leave the other without excuse, whatever the consequence may be.

What can I do? Advise me, my dear. Something is strangely wrong somewhere! to make Parents, the most indulgent till now, seem cruel in a child's eye; and a Daughter, till within these few weeks, thought unexceptionably dutiful, appear, in their judgment, a rebel!—O my ambitious and violent Brother! What may he have to answer for to both!

Be pleased to remember, my dear, that your last favour was dated on Saturday. This is Wednesday: And none of mine have been taken away since. Don't let me want *your* advice. My situation is extremely difficult.—But I am sure you love me still: And not the less on *that* account. Adieu, my beloved friend.

CL. HARLOWE.

LETTER V.

Miss HOWE, To Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Thursday Morning, Day-break, March 30.

AN accident, and not remissness, has occasioned my silence.

My Mother was sent for on Sunday night by her cousin Larkin, whom I mentioned in one of my former, and who was extremely earnest to see her.

This poor woman was always afraid of Death; and was one of those weak persons who imagine that the making of their Will must be an undoubted fore-runner of it.

She had always said, when urged to the necessary work, That whenever she made it, she should not live long after; and, one would think, imagined she was under an obligation to prove her words: For, tho' she had been long bed-ridden, and was, in a manner, worn out before, yet she thought herself better, till she was persuaded to make it: And from that moment, remembering what she used to prognosticate (*her fears helping on what she feared*, as is often the case, particularly in the Small-Pox) grew worse: and had it in her head once to burn her Will, in hopes to grow better upon it.

She sent my Mother word, That the Doctors had given her over: But that she could not die till she saw her. I told my Mother, That if she wished

her

her a chance for recovery, she should not, for *that* reason, go. But go she would ; and, what was worse, would make me go with her ; and that, at an hour's warning ; for she said nothing of it to me, till she was rising in the morning *early*, resolving to return *at night*. Had there been more time for argumentation, to be sure I had not gone ; but as it was, there was a kind of necessity that my preparation to obey her, should, in a manner, accompany her command.—A command so much out of the way, on such a solemn occasion ! And this I represented : But to no purpose : There never was such a contradicting girl in the world—*My wisdom always made her a fool !*—But she *would* be obliged *this time*, proper or improper.

I have but one way of accounting for this sudden whim of my Mother ; and that is this—She had a mind to accept of Mr. Hickman's offer to escorte her :—And I verily believe [I wish I were quite sure of it] had a mind to oblige him with *my* company—As far as I know, to keep me out of *worse*.

For, would you believe it ?—As sure as you are alive, she is afraid for her favourite Hickman, because of the long visit your Lovelace, tho' so much by accident, made me in her absence, last time she was at the same place. I hope, my dear, *you* are not jealous too. But indeed I now-and-then, when she teazes me with praises which Hickman cannot deserve, in return, fall to praising those qualities and personalities in Lovelace, which the other never will have. Indeed I do love to teaze a little bit, that I do.—My Mamma's girl—I had like to have said.

As you know she is as passionate, as I am pert, you will not wonder to be told, that we generally fall out on these occasions. She flies from me, at the long run. It would be undutiful in me to leave her

first—And then I get an opportunity to pursue our *correspondence*.

For, now I am rambling, let me tell you, that she does not much favour *that*;—for *two* reasons, I believe:—One, that I don't shew her all that passes between us; the other, That she thinks I harden your mind against your *duty*, as it is called; and with *her*, for a reason at *home*, as I have hinted more than once, parents cannot do wrong; children cannot oppose, and be right. This obliges me now-and-then to *steal* an hour, as I may say, and not let her know how I am employed.

You may guess from what I have written, how averse I was to comply with this unreasonable stretch of motherly authority—But it came to be a *test of duty*; so I was obliged to yield, tho' with a full persuasion of being in the right.

I have always your reproofs upon these occasions: In your late Letters stronger than ever. A good reason why, you'll say, Because more deserved than ever. I thank you kindly for your correction. I hope to make *Correction* of it—But let me tell you, that your stripes, whether deserved or not, have made me sensible deeper than the skin—But of this another time.

It was Monday afternoon before we reached the old Lady's House. That fiddling, parading fellow (you know who I mean) made us wait for him two hours, and I to go a journey I disliked! only for the sake of having a little more tawdry upon his housings; which he had hurried his sadler to put on, to make him look fine, being to escorte his dear Madam Howe, and her fair Daughter. I told him, that I supposed he was afraid, that the double solemnity in the case (that of the visit to a dying woman, and that of his own countenance) would give him the appearance of an *undertaker*; to avoid which, he

he ran into as bad an extreme, and I doubted would be taken for a *mountebank*.

The man was confounded. He took it as strongly, as if his conscience gave assent to the justice of the remark: Otherwise, he would have borne it better; for he is used enough to this sort of treatment. I thought he would have cried. I have heretofore observed, that on *this* side of the contract, he seems to be a mighty meek sort of creature.—And tho' I should like it in him *hereafter* perhaps, yet I can't help despising him a little in my heart for it *now*. I believe, my dear, we all love your blustering fellows best; could we but direct the bluster, and bid it roar when, and at whom, we pleased.

The poor man looked at my Mother. She was so angry (my airs upon it, and my opposition to the journey, having all helped) that for half the way she would not speak to me. And when she did, it was, I wish I had not brought you! You know not what it is to condescend. It is *my* fault, not *Mr. Hickman's*, that you are here so much against your will. Have you no eyes for this side of the chariot?

And then he fared the better from *her*, as he always does, for faring worse from *me*: For there was, How do you *now*, Sir? And how do you *now*, Mr. Hickman? as he ambled now on this side of the chariot, now on that, stealing a prim look at me; *her* head half out of the chariot, kindly smiling as if married to the man but a fortnight herself: While I always saw something to divert myself on the side of the chariot where the honest man was not, were it but old Robin at a distance, on his Roan Keffel.

Our courtship-days, they say, are our best days. Favour destroys courtship. Distance increases it. Its essence is distance. And to see how familiar these men wretches grow upon a smile, what an awe they

are struck into when we frown ; who would not make them stand off ? Who would not enjoy a power, that is to be so short-lived ?

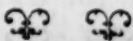
Don't chide me one bit for this, my dear. It is in nature. I can't help it. Nay, for that matter, I love it, and wish not to help it. So spare your gravity, I beseech you, on this subject. I set not up for a perfect character. The man will bear it. And what need *you* care ? My Mother overbalances all he suffers : And if he thinks himself unhappy, he ought never to be otherwise.

Then did he not deserve a fit of the fullens, think you, to make us lose our dinner for his parade, since in so short a journey my Mother would not bait, and lose the opportunity of coming back that night, had the old Lady's condition permitted it ? To say nothing of being the cause, that my Mamma was in the glout with her poor Daughter all the way.

At our alighting I gave him another dab ; but it was but a little one. Yet the manner, and the air, made up (as I intended they should) for that defect. My Mother's hand was kindly put into his, with a simpering altogether bridal ; and with another How do you now, Sir ?—All his plump muscles were in motion, and a double charge of care and obsequiousness fidgetted up his whole form, when he offered to me his officious palm. My Mother, when I was a girl, always bid me hold up my head. I just then remembered her commands, and was dutiful—I never held up my head so high. With an averted supercilious eye, and a rejecting hand, half-flourishing—I have no need of help, Sir !—You are in my way.

He ran back, as if on wheels ; with a face excessively mortified : I had thoughts else to have followed the too gentle touch, with a declaration, that I had as many hands and feet as himself. But this would

would have been telling him a piece of news, as to the latter, that I hope he had not the presumption to guess at.



WE found the poor woman, as we thought, at the last gasp. Had we come *sooner*, we could not have got away, as we intended, that night. You see I am for excusing the man all I can; and yet, I assure you, I have not so much as a *conditional liking* to him. My Mother sat up most part of the night, expecting every hour would have been her poor Cousin's last. I bore her company till Two.

I never saw the approaches of death in a grown person before; and was extremely shocked. Death, to one in health, is a very terrible thing. We pity the person for what *she* suffers: And we pity ourselves for what *we* must some time hence in like sort suffer; and so are *doubly* affected.

She held out till *Tuesday* Morning, Eleven. As she had told my Mother that she had left her an Executrix, and her and me rings and mourning; we were employed all that day, in matters of the Will [By which by the way my Cousin Jenny Fynnett is handsomely provided for]; so that it was *Wednesday* morning early, before we could set out on our return.

It is true, we got home (having no housings to stay for) by noon: But tho' I sent Robin away before he dismounted (who brought me back a whole packet, down to the same *Wednesday* noon) yet was I really so fatigued, and shocked, as I must own, at the hard death of the old Lady; my Mother likewise (who has no reason to dislike this world) being indisposed from the same occasion; that I could not set about writing time enough for Robin's return that night.

But having recruited my spirits, my Mother having also had a good night, I arose with the dawn, to

write this, and get it dispatched time enough for your breakfast-airing ; that your suspense might be as short as possible.

I WILL soon follow This with another. I will employ a person directly to find out how Lovelace behaves himself at his Inn. Such a busy spirit must be traceable.

But, perhaps, my dear, you are indifferent *now* about him, or his employments ; for this request was made before he *mortally* offended you. Nevertheless, I will have inquiry made. The result, it is very probable, will be of use to confirm you in your present unforgiving temper.—And yet, if the *poor* man [Shall I pity him for *you*, my dear ?] should be deprived of the greatest blessing any man on earth can receive, and to which he has the presumption, with so little merit, to aspire ; he will have run great risques ; caught great colds ; hazarded fevers ; sustained the highest indignities ; braved the inclemencies of skies, and all for—*nothing* !—Will not this move your *generosity* (if nothing else) in his favour !—Poor Mr. Lovelace !—

I would occasion no throb ; nor half-throb ; no flash of sensibility, like lightning darting in, and as soon suppressed by a discretion that no one of the Sex ever before could give such an example of—I *would not*, I say ; and yet, for a trial of *you* to *yourself*, rather than as an impertinent overflow of railery in your friend, as money-takers try a suspected guinea by the *sound*, let me, on such a supposition, *sound you*, by repeating, *Poor Mr. Lovelace* !—

And now, my dear, how is it with you ? How do you now, as my Mother says to Mr. Hickman, when her pert Daughter has made him look sorrowful ?

L E T.

LETTER VI.

*Mr. HICKMAN, To Mrs. HOWE.**Madam,**Wednesday, Mar. 29.*

• **I**T is with infinite regret that I think myself ob-
 • liged, by pen and ink, to repeat my appre-
 • hensions, that it is impossible for me ever to obtain
 • a share in the Affections of your beloved Daugh-
 • ter. O that it were not too evident to every one,
 • as well as to myself, even to our very servants,
 • that my Love for her, and my Assiduities, expose
 • me rather to her Scorn (Forgive me, Madam, the
 • hard word!) than to the treatment due to a man
 • whose proposals have met with your approbation,
 • and who loves her above all the women in the
 • world.

• Well might the merit of my passion be doubted,
 • if, like Mr. Solmes to the truly admirable Miss
 • Clarissa Harlowe, I could continue my addresses to
 • Miss Howe's distaste. Yet what will not the dis-
 • continuance cost me!

• Give me leave, nevertheless, dearest, worthiest
 • Lady, to repeat, what I told you, on Monday night,
 • at Mrs. Larkins's, with a heart even bursting with
 • grief, That I wanted not the treatment of that
 • day to convince me, that I am not, nor ever can
 • be, the object of Miss Howe's voluntary favour.
 • What hopes can there be, that a Lady will ever
 • esteem, as a Husband, the man, whom, as a Lo-
 • ver, she despises? Will not every act of obliging-
 • ness from such a one, be construed an unmanly
 • tameness of spirit, and intitle him the more to
 • her disdain?—My heart is full: Forgive me if I
 • say, that Miss Howe's treatment of me does no
 • credit either to her education, or fine sense.

• Since then it is too evident, that she cannot
 • esteem me; and since, as I have heard it justly
 • : observed

• observed by the excellent Miss Clarissa Harlowe,
 • that Love is not a voluntary passion; would it not
 • be ungenerous to subject the dear Daughter to the
 • displeasure of a Mother so justly fond of her; and
 • you, Madam, while you are so good as to interest
 • yourself in my favour, to uneasiness? And why,
 • were I to be even sure, at last, of succeeding by
 • means of your kind partiality to me, should I wish
 • to make the Best-beloved of my soul unhappy;
 • since mutual must be our happiness, or misery for
 • life the consequence to both?

• My best wishes will for ever attend the dear, the
 • ever-dear Lady! May her Nuptials be happy! They
 • must be so, if she marry the man she can honour
 • with her Love. Yet I will say, that whoever be
 • the happy, the thrice happy man, he never can
 • love her with a passion more ardent and more sincere than mine.

• Accept, dear Madam, of my most grateful thanks
 • for a distinction that has been the only support of
 • my presumption in the address I am obliged, as
 • utterly hopeless, to discontinue. A distinction,
 • on which (and not on my own merits) I had intirely
 • relied; but which, I find, can avail me nothing.
 • To the last hour of my life, it will give me
 • pleasure to think, that had your favour, your
 • commendation, been of sufficient weight to conquer
 • what seems to be an invincible Aversion, I had
 • been the happiest of men.

• I am, dear Madam, with inviolable respect,

• *Your ever-obliged and faithful*

• *humble Servant,*

• CHARLES HICKMAN.

LET-

L E T T E R VII.

• Mrs. HOWE, To CHARLES HICKMAN, Esq;

• Thursday, March 30.

• I Cannot but say, Mr. Hickman, but you have
 • cause to be dissatisfied—to be out of humour—
 • to be displeased—with Nancy—But, upon my word;
 • But indeed—What shall I say?—Yet this I will
 • say, that you *good* young gentlemen know nothing
 • at all of our Sex. Shall I tell you—But why should
 • I? And yet I will say, That if Nancy did not
 • think well of you in the main, she is too generous
 • to treat you so freely as she does.—Don't you
 • think she has courage enough to tell me, She
 • would not see you, and to refuse at any time see-
 • ing you, as she knows on what account you come,
 • if she had not something in her head favourable to
 • you?—Fie! that I am forced to say thus much in
 • Writing, when I have hinted it to you twenty and
 • twenty times by word of mouth.

• But if you are so indifferent, Mr. Hickman—
 • If you think you can part with her for her skittish
 • tricks—If *my* interest in your favour—Why, Mr.
 • Hickman, I must tell you, that my Nancy is worth
 • bearing with. If she be *foolish*—what is that ow-
 • ing to?—Is it not to her *Wit*? Let me tell you,
 • Sir, you cannot have the convenience without the
 • inconvenience. What workman loves not a sharp
 • tool to work with? But is there not more danger
 • from a sharp tool, than from a blunt one? And what
 • workman will throw away a sharp tool, because it
 • may cut his fingers? Wit may be likened to a
 • sharp tool. And there is something very pretty in
 • Wit, let me tell you. Often and often have I been
 • forced to smile at her arch turns upon me, when
 • I could have beat her for them. And, pray, don't
 • I bear a great deal from her?—And why? Be-
 • : cause

• cause I love her. And would you not wish me to
 • judge of your Love for her by my own? And
 • would not you bear with her?—Don't you love
 • her (what tho' with another sort of Love?) as well
 • as I do? I do assure you, Sir, that if I thought you
 • did not—Well, but it is plain that you don't!—
 • And is it plain that you don't?—Well, then, you
 • must do as you think best.

• Well might the merit of your passion be doubted,
 • you say, if, like Mr. Solmes—Fiddle-faddle!—
 • Why, you are a captious man, I think!—Has
 • Nancy been so plain in her repulses of you as Miss
 • Clary Harlowe has been to Mr. Solmes?—Does
 • Nancy love any man better than you, altho' she
 • may not shew so much Love to you as you wish for?
 • —If she did, let me tell you, she would have let
 • us all hear of it.—What idle comparisons then!

• But it may be you are tired out. It may be you
 • have seen somebody else—It may be you would
 • wish to change Mistresses with that gay wretch Mr.
 • Lovelace. It may be too, that, in that case, Nancy
 • would not be sorry to change Lovers—The *truly*
 • *admirable* Miss Clarissa Harlowe! And the *excel-*
 • *lent* Miss Clarissa Harlowe!—Good-lack!—But
 • take care, Mr. Hickman, that you do not praise
 • any woman living, let her be as admirable and as
 • excellent as she will, above your own Mistress. No
 • polite man will do that, surely. And take care
 • too, that you do not make her or me think you
 • are in earnest in your anger—Just tho' it may be,
 • as anger only—I would not for a thousand pounds;
 • that Nancy should know that you can so easily
 • part with her, if you have the Love for her which
 • you declare you have. Be sure, if you are not
 • absolutely determined, that you do not so much as
 • whisper the contents of this your Letter to your own
 • heart, as I may say.

: Her

• Her treatment of you, you say, does no credit
 • either to her education or fine sense. Very home
 • put, truly! Nevertheless, so say I. But is not
 • hers the disgrace, more than yours? I can assure
 • you, that every-body blames her for it. And *why*
 • do they blame her?—Why? Because they think
 • you merit better treatment at her hands: And is
 • not this to your credit? Who but pities *you*, and
 • blames *her*? Do the servants, who, as you ob-
 • serve, see her skittish airs, disrespect you for them?
 • Do they not, at such times, look concerned for
 • you? Are they not then doubly officious in their
 • respects and services to you?—I have observed
 • with pleasure, that they are.

• But you are afraid you shall be thought tame,
 • perhaps, when married. That you shall not be
 • thought *manly* enough, I warrant!—And this was
 • poor Mr. Howe's fear. And many a tug did this
 • lordly fear cost us both, God knows!—Many more
 • than needed, I am sure!—And more than ought
 • to have been, had he known how to *bear and for-*
 • *bear*; as is the duty of those who pretend to have
 • most sense—And, pray, which would you have
 • to have most sense, the woman or the man?

• Well, Sir, and now what remains, if you really
 • love Nancy so well as you say you do?—Why, I
 • leave that to you. You may, if you please, come
 • to breakfast with me in the morning. But with
 • no *full heart*, nor resenting looks, I advise you;
 • except you can brave it out. That have I, when
 • provoked, done many a time with my *Husband*;
 • but never did I get any-thing by it with my *Daugh-*
 • *ter*: Much less will you. Of which, for your
 • observation, I thought fit to advertise you. As
 • from

• Your Friend,

• ANNABELLA HOWE.

I

LET-

LETTER VIII.

Miss Howe, To Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Thursday Morning.

I Will now take some notice of your last favour. But being so far behind-hand with you, must be brief.

In the first place, as to your reproofs, thus shall I discharge myself of that part of my subject.—Is it likely, think you, that I should avoid deserving them now-and-then, occasionally, when I admire the manner in which you give me your rebukes, and love you the better for them? And when you are so well *intituled* to give them? For what faults can *you* possibly have, unless your relations are so kind as to find you a *few* to keep their *many* in countenance?—But, They are as kind to *me* in This, as to *you*; for I may venture to affirm, That any one who should read *your* Letters, and would say you were *right*, would not on reading *mine* condemn me for being *quite wrong*.

Your resolution not to leave your Father's house is right—if you can stay in it, and avoid being Solmes's Wife.

I think you answered Solmes's Letter, as *I* should have answered it.—Will you not compliment me and yourself at once, by saying, that *That* was right?

You have, in your Letters to your Uncle and the rest, done all that you ought to do. You are wholly guiltless of the consequence, be it what it will. To offer to give up your Estate!—That would not I have done! You see this offer staggered them: They took time to consider of it. They made my heart ache in the time they took. I was afraid they would have taken you at your word: And so, but for shame, and for fear of Lovelace, I dare say, they would. You are too noble for them. This, I re-

peat, is an offer *I* would not have made. Let me beg of you, my dear, never to repeat the temptation to them.

I freely own to you, that their usage of you upon it, and Lovelace's different treatment of you (*a*) in his Letter received at the same time, would have made *me* his, past redemption. The duce take the man, I was going to say, for not having had so much regard to his character and morals, as would have intirely justified such a step in a CLARISSA, persecuted as she is!

I wonder not at your appointment with him. I may further touch upon some part of this subject by-and-by.

Pray—pray—I pray you now, my dearest friend, contrive to send your Betty Barnes to me!—Does the Coventry Act extend to women, know ye?—The *least* I will do, shall be, to send her home well foused in and dragged through our deepest horse-pond. I'll engage, if I get her hither, that she shall keep the anniversary of her deliverance as long as she lives.

I wonder not at Lovelace's saucy Answer, saucy as it really is (*b*). If he loves you as he ought, he must be vexed at so great a disappointment. The man must have been a detestable hypocrite, I think, had he not shewn his vexation. Your expectations of such a Christian command of temper in him, in a disappointment of this nature especially, are too early by almost half a century in a man of his constitution. But nevertheless I am very far from blaming you for your resentment.

I shall be all impatience to know how this matter ends between you and him. But a *few inches of brick-wall* between you so lately; and now such *mountains*!—And you think to hold it?—May be so!

(*a*) See p. 11.

(*b*) See p. 29—31.

You see, you say, that the temper he shewed in his preceding Letter was not *natural* to him. And did you before think it *was*? Wretched creepers and insinulators! Yet when opportunity serves, as insolent incroachers!—This very Hickman, I make no doubt, would be as saucy as your Lovelace, if he dared. He has not half the arrogant bravery of the other, and can better hide his horns; that's all. But whenever he has the power, depend upon it, he will *butt* at one as valiantly as the other.

If ever I should be persuaded to have him, I shall watch how the obsequious Lover *goes off*; and how the imperative Husband *comes upon him*; in short, how he *ascends*, and how I *descend*, in the matrimonial wheel, never to take my turn again, but by fits and starts, like the feeble struggles of a sinking State for its dying Liberty.

All good-natured men are passionate, says Mr. Lovelace. A pretty plea to a beloved object in the plenitude of her power! As much as to say, 'Greatly as I value you, Madam, I will not take pains to curb my passions to oblige you.'—Methinks, I should be glad to hear from Mr. Hickman such a plea for good-nature as this.

Indeed, we are too apt to make allowances for such tempers as *early* indulgence has made uncontrollable; and therefore habitually evil. But if a boisterous temper, when under *obligation*, is to be thus allowed for, what, when the tables are turned, will it expect? You know a Husband, who, I fancy, had some of these early allowances made for him: And you see that neither himself nor any-body else is the happier for it.

The suiting of the tempers of two persons who are to come together, is a great matter: And yet there should be boundaries fixed between them, by consent as it were, beyond which neither should go:
And

And each should hold the other to it ; or there would probably be encroachments in both. To illustrate my assertion by a very high, and by a more manly (as some would think it) than womanly instance—If the boundaries of the Three Estates that constitute our Political Union were not known, and occasionally asserted, what would become of the Prerogatives and Privileges of each ? The two branches of the Legislature would encroach upon each other ; and the Executive power would swallow up both.

But if two persons of discretion, you'll say, come together—

Ay, my dear, that's true : But, if none but persons of discretion were to marry—And would it not surprise you if I were to advance, that the persons of discretion are generally single ?—Such persons are apt to consider too much, to resolve.—Are not you and I complimented as such ?—And would either of us marry, if the fellows, and our friends, would let us alone ?

But to the former point ;—Had Lovelace made his addresses to me (unless indeed I had been taken with a liking for him *more than conditional*) I would have forbid him, upon the first *passionate* instance of his *good-nature*, as he calls it, ever to see me more :
 ' Thou must bear with me, honest friend, might I
 ' have said (had I condescended to say any-thing to
 ' him) an hundred times more than This :—Be-
 ' gone therefore !—I bear with no passions that
 ' are predominant to That thou hast pretended for
 ' me !'

But to one of your mild and gentle temper, it would be all one, were you married, whether the man were a Lovelace or a Hickman in his spirit.—You are so obediently principled, that perhaps you would have told a mild man, that he must not *intreat*, but *command* ; and that it was beneath him not to exact

from you the obedience you had so solemnly vowed to him at the Altar.—I know of old, my dear, your meek regard to that little piddling part of the marriage vow which some Prerogative-monger foisted into the office, to make That a *duty*, which he knew was not a *right*.

Our way of training-up, you say, *makes us need the protection of the brave*. Very true: and how extremely brave and gallant is it, that this brave man will free us from all insults but those which will go nearest to our hearts; that is to say, His own!

How artfully has Lovelace, in the abstract you give me of one of his Letters, calculated to your meridian; *Generous spirits hate compulsion*!—He is certainly a deeper creature by much than once we thought him. He knows, as you intimate, that his own wild pranks cannot be concealed; and so owns just enough to palliate (because it teaches you not to be surprised at) any new one, that may come to your ears; and then, truly, he is, however faulty, a mighty *ingenuous* man; and by no means an *hypocrite*: A character, when found out, the most odious of all others, to *our Sex*, in the *other*; were it only because it teaches us to doubt the justice of the praises such a man gives us, when we are willing to believe them to be our due.

By means of this supposed *ingenuity*, Lovelace obtains a praise, instead of a merited dispraise; and, like an absolved confessionaire, wipes off as he goes along one score, to begin another: For an eye favourable to him will not magnify his faults; nor will a woman, willing to *hope the best*, forbear to impute to ill-will and prejudice all that charity can make so imputable. And if she even give credit to such of the unfavourable imputations as may be too flagrant to be doubted, she will be very apt to take in the *future hope*, which he inculcates, and which to question would be

be to question her own power, and perhaps *merit*: And thus may a woman be inclined to make a *slight*, even a *fancied* merit atone for the most *glaring* vice.

I have a reason, a new one, for this preachment upon a text you have given me. But, till I am better informed, I will not explain myself. If it come out, as I shrewdly suspect it will, the man, my dear, is a devil; and you must rather think of—I protest I had like to have said *Solmes* than him.

But let This be as it will, shall I tell you, how, after all his offences, he may creep in with you again?

I will. Thus then: It is but to claim for himself the *good-natured character*: And This, granted, will blot out the fault of *passionate* insolence: And so he will have nothing to do, but This hour to accustom you to insult; the Next, to bring you to forgive him, upon his submission: The consequence must be, that he will by this teasing break your resentment all to pieces: And then, a little *more* of the insult, and a little *less* of the submission, on his part, will go down, till nothing else but the *first* will be seen, and not a bit of the *second*: You will then be afraid to provoke so offensive a spirit; and at last will be brought so *prettily*, and so *audibly*, to pronounce the little reptile word OBEY, that it will do one's heart good to hear you. The *Muscovite* Wife then takes place of the *managed* mistress.—And if you doubt the progression, be pleased, my dear, to take your Mother's judgment upon it.

But no more of This just now. Your Story is become too arduous to permit me to dwell upon these sort of topics. And yet this is but an *affected* Levity with me. My heart, as I have heretofore said, is a sincere sharer in all your distresses. My sunshine darts but thro' a drizzly cloud. My eye, were
 E 2 you

you to see it, when it seems to you so *gladdened*, as you mentioned in a former, is *more* than ready to overflow, even at the very passages perhaps upon which you impute to me the *arcbness* of *exultation*.

But now the unheard-of cruelty and perverseness of some of your friends [*Relations*, I should say—I am always blundering thus!]; the *as* strange determinedness of others; your present quarrel with Lovelace; and your approaching Interview with Solmes, from which you are right to apprehend a great deal; are such considerable circumstances in your Story, that it is fit they should engross all my attention.

You ask me to advise you how to behave upon Solmes's visit. I *cannot* for my life. I know they expect a great deal from it: You had not else had your long day complied with. All I will say is, That if Solmes cannot be prevailed for, now, that Lovelace has so much offended you, he never will. When the Interview is over, I doubt not but that I shall have reason to say, that All you did, that All you said, was right, and could not be better: Yet, if I don't think so, I won't say so; that I promise you.

Only let me advise you to pull up a spirit, even to your Uncle, if there be occasion. Repent the vile and foolish treatment you meet with, in which he has taken so large a share, and make him ashamed of it, if you can.

I know not, upon recollection, but This Interview may be a good thing for you, however designed. For when Solmes sees (if that be to *be* so) that it is impossible he should succeed with you; and your relations see it too; the one must, I think, recede, and the other come to terms with you, upon offers, that it is my opinion, will go hard enough with you

to

to comply with ; when the *still* harder are dispensed with.

There are several passages in your last Letters, as well as in your former, which authorize me to say This. But it would be unseasonable to touch this subject further just now.

But, upon the whole, I have no patience to see you thus made the sport of your Brother's and Sister's cruelty : For what, after *so much steadiness* on your part, in *so many trials*, can be their hope ? *Except indeed it be to drive you to extremity, and to ruin you in the opinion of your Uncles, as well as Father.*

I urge you by all means to fend out of their reach all the Letters and Papers you would not have them see. Methinks, I would wish you to deposit likewise a parcel of cloaths, linen, and the like, before your Interview with Solmes ; lest you should not have an opportunity for it afterwards. Robin shall fetch it away on the first orders, by day or by night.

I am in hopes to procure from my Mother, if things come to extremity, leave for you to be privately with us.

I will condition to be good-humour'd, and even *kind*, to HER favourite, if she will shew me an indulgence that shall make me serviceable to MINE.

This alternative has been a good while in my head. But as your foolish Uncle has so strangely attached my Mother to their views, I cannot promise that I shall succeed as I wish.

Do not absolutely despair, however. What tho' the contention will be between *Woman* and *Woman*, I fancy I shall be able to manage it, by the help of a little *female perseverance*. Your quarrel with Lovelace, if it continue, will strengthen my hands. And the offers you made in your Answer to your

Uncle Harlowe's Letter of Sunday night last, *duly dwell upon*, must add force to my pleas.

I depend upon your forgiveness of all the perhaps unreasonableness of your naturally too lively, yet most sincerely sympathizing,

ANNA HOWE.

LETTER IX.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, To MISS HOWE.

Friday, March 31.

YOU have very kindly accounted for your silence. People in misfortune are always in doubt. They are too apt to turn even unavoidable accidents into flights and neglects; especially in those whose favourable opinion they wish to preserve.

I am sure I ought evermore to exempt my Anna Howe from the supposed possibility of her becoming one of those who bask only in the Sunshine of a friend: But nevertheless her friendship is too precious to me, not to doubt my own merits on the one hand, and not to be anxious for the preservation of it, on the other.

You so generously give me liberty to chide you, that I am afraid of taking it, because I could sooner mistrust my own judgment, than that of a beloved friend, whose ingenuity in acknowledging an *imputed* error seems to set her above the commission of a *wilful* one. This makes me half-afraid to ask you, If you think you are not too cruel, too *ungenerous* shall I say, in your behaviour to a man who loves you so dearly, and is so worthy and so sincere a man?

Only it is by You, or I should be ashamed to be outdone in that true magnanimity, which makes one thankful for the wounds given by a true friend. I believe I was guilty of a petulance, which nothing but

but my uneasy situation can excuse; if *that* can. I am almost *afraid* to beg of you, and yet I repeatedly *do*, to give way to that charming spirit, whenever it rises to your pen, which smiles, yet goes to the quick of my fault. What patient shall be afraid of a probe in so delicate a hand?—I say, I am almost afraid to pray you to give way to it, for fear you should, for that very reason, restrain it. For the edge may be taken off, if it does not make the subject of its rail-ery wince a little. *Permitted* or *desired* Satire may be apt, in a generous Satirist, mending as it raillies, to turn too soon into Panegyric. Yours is intended to instruct; and tho' it bites, it pleases at the same time: No fear of a wound's rankling or festering by so delicate a point as you carry; not envenomed by *personality*, not intending to expose, or ridicule, or exasperate. The most admired of our moderns know nothing of this Art: Why? Because it must be founded in good-nature, and directed by a right heart. The *man*, not the *fault*, is generally the subject of *their* Satire: And were it to be *just*, how should it be *useful*; how should it answer any good purpose; when every gash (for their weapon is a Broad-Sword, not a Lancet) lets in the air of public ridicule, and exasperates where it should heal? Spare me not therefore because I am your *friend*. For *that* very reason spare me not. I may *feel* your edge, fine as it is. I may be pained: You would lose your end if I were not: But after the first sensibility (as I have said more than once before) I will love you the better, and my amended heart shall be all yours; and it will then be more worthy to be yours.

You have taught me what to say to, and what to think of, Mr. Lovelace. You have, by agreeable anticipation, let me know how it is probable he will apply to me to be excused. I will lay every-thing before you that shall pass on the occasion, if he *do* apply,

apply, that I may take your advice, when it can come in time ; and when it cannot, that I may receive your correction, or approbation, as I may happen to merit either.—Only one thing must be allowed for me ; that whatever course I shall be *permitted* or be *forced* to steer, I must be considered as a person out of her own direction. Tost to and fro by the high winds of passionate controul (and, as I think, unreasonable severity) I behold the desired Port, the *Single State*, which I would fain steer into ; but am kept off by the foaming billows of a Brother's and Sister's Envy, and by the raging winds of a supposed invaded Authority ; while I see in Lovelace, the Rocks on one hand, and in Solmes, the Sands on the other ; and tremble, lest I should split upon the former, or strike upon the latter.

But you, my better pilot, to what a charming hope do you bid me aspire, if things come to extremity !—I will not, as you caution me, too much depend upon your success with your Mother in my favour ; for well I know her high notions of implicit duty in a child : But yet I will *hope* too ; because her seasonable protection may save me perhaps from a greater rashness : And in This case, she shall direct me in all my ways : I will do nothing but by her orders, and by her advice and yours : Not see any-body : Not write to any-body : Nor shall any living soul, but by her direction and yours, know where I am. In any Cottage place me, I will never stir out, unless, disguised as your servant, I am now-and-then permitted an evening-walk with you : And this private protection to be granted for no longer time than till my Cousin Morden comes ; which, as I hope, cannot be long.

I am afraid I must not venture to take the hint you give me, to deposit some of my Cloaths ; altho' I will some of my Linen, as well as Papers.

I will

I will tell you why—Betty had for some time been very curious about my wardrobe, whenever I took out any of my things before her.

Observing this, I once, on taking one of my garden-airings, left my keys in the locks; and on my return surpris'd the creature with her hand upon the keys, as if shutting the door.

She was confounded at my sudden coming back. I took no notice: But, on her retiring, I found my cloaths were not in the usual order.

I doubted not, upon this, that her curiosity was owing to the orders she had received; and being afraid they would abridge me of my Airings, if their suspicions were not obviated, it has ever since been my custom (among other contrivances) not only to leave my keys in the locks; but to employ the wench now-and-then, in taking out my cloaths, suit by suit, on pretence of preventing their being rumbled or creased, and to see that the flowered silver suit did not tarnish; sometimes declaredly to give myself employment, having little else to do: With which employment (superadded to the delight taken by the Low as well as by the High of our Sex in seeing fine cloaths) she seem'd always, I thought, as well pleas'd as if it answer'd one of the offices she had in charge.

To this, and to the confidence they have in a Spy so diligent, and to their knowing, that I have not one confidante in a family in which nevertheless I believe every servant loves me; nor have attempted to make one; I suppose, I owe the freedom I enjoy of my Airings: And perhaps (finding I make no movements towards going away) they are the more secure, that I shall at last be prevail'd upon to comply with their measures: since they must think, that, otherwise, they give me provocation enough to take some rash step in order to free myself from a treatment so disgraceful; and which (God forgive me, if

I judge

I judge amiss!) *I am afraid my Brother and Sister would not be sorry to drive me to take.*

If therefore such a step should become necessary (which I yet hope will not) I must be contented to go away with the cloaths I shall have on at the time. My custom to be dressed for the day, as soon as breakfast is over, when I have had no household-employments to prevent me, will make such a step (if I am forced to take it) less suspected. And the Linen I shall deposit, in pursuance of your kind hint, cannot be missed.

This custom, altho' a prisoner (as I may too truly say) and neither visited nor visiting, I continue. We owe to ourselves, and to our *Sex*, you know, to be always neat; and never to be surpris'd in a way we should be pained to be seen in.

Besides, people in adversity (which is the State of Trial of every good quality) should endeavour to preserve laudable customs, that, if Sunshine return, they may not be losers by their Trial.

Does it not, moreover, manifest a firmness of mind, in an unhappy person, to keep hope alive? To *hope* for better days, is half to *deserve* them: For could we have just ground for such a hope, if we did not resolve to deserve what that hope bids us aspire to?—Then who shall befriend a person who forsakes herself?

These are reflections by which I sometimes endeavour to support myself.

I know you don't despise my *grave airs*, altho' (with a view no doubt to irradiate my mind in my misfortunes) you railly me upon them. Every-body has not your talent of introducing serious and important lessons in such a happy manner as at once to delight and instruct.

What a multitude of contrivances may not young people fall upon, if the mind be not engaged by
acts

acts of kindness and condescension ! I am not used by my friends of late as I always used their servants.

When I was intrusted with the family-management, I always found it right, as well in Policy as Generosity to repose a trust in them. Not to seem to expect or depend upon justice from them, is in a manner to bid them take opportunities, when ever they offer, to be unjust.

Mr. Solmes (to expatiate a little on this low, but not unuseful subject) in his more trifling sollicitudes, would have had a sorry key-keeper in me. Were I mistress of a family, I would not either take to myself, or give to servants, the pain of keeping those I had reason to suspect. People low in station have often minds not fordid. Nay, I have sometimes thought, that (even take number for number) there are more *honest low people*, than *honest high*. In the one, Honesty is their *chief* pride. In the other, the Love of Power, of Grandeur, of Pleasure, mislead ; and That and their Ambition induce a paramount Pride, which too often swallows up the more laudable one.

Many of the former would scorn to deceive a confidence. But I have seen, among the most ignorant of their class, a susceptibility of resentment, if their honesty has been suspected : And have more than once been forced to put a servant *right*, whom I have heard say, That, altho' she valued herself upon her *honesty*, no master or mistress should suspect her for nothing.

How far has the comparison I had in my head, between my friends treatment of *me*, and my treatment of their *servants*, carried me ! But we always allowed ourselves to expatiate on such subjects, whether low or high, as might tend to enlarge our minds, or mend our management, whether notional or practical, and whether such expatiating respected
our

our present, or might respect our probable future situations.

What I was principally leading to, was to tell you, how ingenious I am in my contrivances and pretences to blind my gaolerefs, and to take off the jealousy of her principals on my going down so often into the garden and poultry-yard. People suspiciously treated are never I believe at a loss for invention. Sometimes I want *air*, and am better the moment I am out of my chamber—Sometimes *spirits*; and then my Bantams and Pheasants or the Cascade divert me; the former, by their inspiriting liveliness; the latter, more solemnly, by its echoing dashings, and hollow murmurs.—Sometimes, Solitude is of all things my wish; and the awful silence of the night, the spangled element, and the rising and setting Sun, how promotive of contemplation!—Sometimes, when I intend nothing, and expect not Letters, I am officious to take Betty with me; and at others, bespeak her attendance, when I know she is otherwise employed, and cannot give it me.

These more capital artifices I branch out into lesser ones, without number. Yet *all* have not only the face of truth, but are real truth; altho' not my principal motive. How prompt a thing is *will*! What impediments does *dislike* furnish!—How swiftly, thro' every difficulty, do we move with the one!—How tardily with the other!—Every trifling obstruction weighing us down, as if Lead were fastened to our feet!

Friday Morning, Eleven o'Clock.

I HAVE already made up my parcel of Linen. My heart ached all the time I was employed about it; and still aches, at the thoughts of its being a necessary precaution.

When

When the parcel comes to your hands, as I hope it safely will, you will be pleased to open it. You will find in it two parcels sealed up; one of which contains the Letters you have not yet seen; being those written since I left you: In the other are all the Letters and Copies of Letters that have passed between you and me since I was last with you; with some other papers on subjects so much above me, that I cannot wish them to be seen by any-body whose indulgence I am not so sure of, as I am of yours. If my judgment ripen with my years, perhaps I may review them.

Mrs. Norton used to say, from her reverend Father, that there was one time of life for *Imagination* and *Fancy* to work in: Then, were the writer to lay by his works till *riper years* and *experience* should direct the fire rather to *glow*, than to *flame out*; something between both might perhaps be produced that would not displease a judicious eye.

In a third division, folded up separately, are all Mr. Lovelace's Letters written to me since he was forbidden this house, and copies of my Answers to them. I expect that you will break the seals of this parcel, and when you have perused them all, give me your free opinion of my conduct.

By the way, Not a line from that man!—Not *one* line!—Wednesday I deposited mine. It remained there on Wednesday night. What time it was taken away yesterday I cannot tell: For I did not concern myself about it, till towards night; and then it was not there. No return at Ten this day. I suppose he is as much out of humour, as I.—With all my heart!

He may be mean enough perhaps, if ever I should put it into his *power*, to avenge himself for the trouble he has had with me.—But that now, I dare say, I never shall.

I see

I see what sort of a man the encroacher is. And I hope we are equally sick of one another.—My heart is *vexedly*-easy, if I may so describe it.—*Vexedly*—because of the apprehended Interview with Solmes, and the consequences it may be attended with : Or else I should be *quite* easy ; for why ? I have not *deserved* the usage I receive :—And could I be rid of Solmes, as I presume I am of Lovelace, *their* influence over my Father, Mother, and Uncles against me, could not hold.

The five guineas tied up in one corner of a handkerchief under the Linen, I beg you will let pass as an acknowledgement for the trouble I give your trusty servant. You must not chide me for this. You know I cannot be easy unless I have my way in these little matters.

I was going to put up what little money I have, and some of my ornaments ; but they are portable, and I cannot forget them. Besides, should they (suspecting me) desire to see any of the jewels, and were I not able to produce them, it would amount to a demonstration of an intention which would have a guilty appearance to them.

Friday, One o'Clock, in the Woodhouse.

No Letter yet from this man ! I have luckily deposited my Parcel, and have your Letter of last night. If Robert take This without the Parcel, pray let him return immediately for it. But he cannot miss it, I think ; and must conclude that it is put there for him to take away. You may believe, from the contents of yours, that I shall immediately write again.—

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

LET-

LETTER X.

*Miss HOWE, To Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE.**Thursday Night, March 30.*

THE fruits of my enquiry after your abominable wretch's behaviour and baseness at the paltry Ale-house, which he calls an Inn, prepare to hear.

Wrens and Sparrows are not too ignoble a quarry for this villainous Gof-hawk!—His assiduities; his watchings; his nightly risques; the inclement weather he journeys in; must not be all placed to *your* account. He has opportunities of making everything light to him of that sort. A sweet pretty girl, I am told—Innocent till he went thither—Now! (Ah! poor girl!) who knows what?

But just turned of Seventeen!—His friend and brother Rake (a man of humour and intrigue) as I am told, to share the social bottle with. And sometimes another disguised Rake or two. No sorrow comes near their hearts. Be not disturbed, my dear, at his *hoarsenesses*! His pretty Bertsey, his Rose-bud, as the vile wretch calls her, can *hear* all he says.

He is very fond of her. They say she is innocent even yet—Her Father, her Grandmother, believe her to be so. He is to fortune her out to a young lover!—Ah! the poor young lover!—Ah! the poor simple girl!

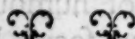
Mr. Hickman tells me, that he heard in town, that he used to be often at Plays, and at the Opera, with women; and every time with a different one—Ah! my sweet friend!—But I hope he is nothing to you, if all this were truth—But this intelligence, in relation to this poor girl, will do his business, if you had been ever so good friends before.

A vile

A vile wretch ! Cannot such purity in pursuit, in view, restrain him ? But I leave him to you !—There can be no hope of him. More of a fool, than of such a man. Yet I wish I may be able to snatch the poor young creature out of his villainous paws. I have laid a scheme to do so ; if *indeed* she be hitherto innocent and heart-free.

He appears to the people as a military man, in disguise, secreting himself on account of a duel fought in town ; the adversary's life in suspense. They believe he is a great man. His friend passes for an inferior officer ; upon a foot of freedom with him. He, accompanied by a third man, who is a sort of subordinate companion to the second. The wretch himself with but one servant.

O my dear ! How pleasantly can these devils, as I must call them, pass their time, while our gentle bosoms heave with pity for their supposed sufferings for us !



I HAVE sent for this girl and her Father ; and am just now informed, that I shall see them. I will sift them thoroughly. I shall soon find out such a simple thing as This, if he has not corrupted her already—And if he has, I shall soon find that out too.—If more Art than Nature appear either in her or her Father, I shall give them both up—But depend upon it, the girl's undone.

He is said to be fond of her. He places her at the upper end of his table. He sets her a-prattling. He keeps his friend at a distance from her. She prates away. He admires for nature all she says. Once was heard to call her Charming little creature ! An hundred has he called so no doubt. He puts her upon singing. He praises her wild note.—O my dear, the girl's undone !—must be undone !—The man, you know, is **LOVELACE**.

Let

Let 'em bring Wyerley to you, if they will have you married—Any-body but Solmes and Lovelace be yours!—So advises

Your

ANNA HOWE.

My dearest friend, consider this Alehouse as his garison. Him as an enemy. His Brother-rakes as his assistants and abettors: Would not your Brother, would not your Uncles, tremble, if they knew how near them he is, as they pass to and fro?—I am told, he is resolved you shall not be carried to your Uncle Antony's. —What can you do, *with* or *without* such an enterprizing—. Fill up the blank I leave. —I cannot find a word bad enough.

LETTER XI.

Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, To Miss HOWE.

Friday, Three o'Clock.

YOU incense, alarm, and terrify me, at the same time—Hasten, my dearest friend, hasten to me, what further intelligence you can gather about this vilest of men.

But never talk of innocence, of simplicity, and this unhappy girl, together! Must she not know, that such a man as That, dignified in his very aspect; and no disguise able to conceal his being of condition; must mean too much, when he places her at the upper end of his table, and calls her by such tender names: Would a girl, modest as simple, above Seventeen, be set a singing at the pleasure of such a man as That? A stranger, and professedly in disguise!—Would her Father and Grandmother, if honest people, and careful of their simple girl, permit such freedoms?

Keep his friend at distance from her!—To be sure his *designs* are villainous, if they have not been already effected.

Warn, my dear, if not too late, the unthinking Father, of his child's danger. There cannot be a Father in the World, who would sell his child's virtue. No Mother!—The poor thing!—

I long to hear the result of your intelligence. You shall *see* the simple creature, you tell me.—Let me know what sort of a girl she is.—*A sweet pretty girl!* you say. *A sweet pretty girl,* my dear!—They are sweet pretty words from your pen. But are they *yours* or *his* of her?—If she be so simple, if she have Ease and Nature in her manner, in her speech, and warbles prettily her *wild notes*, why, such a girl as That must engage such a profligate wretch (as now indeed I doubt this man is) accustomed, perhaps, to town-women, and their confident ways—Must *deeply* and for a *long season* engage him: Since perhaps when her Innocence is departed, she will endeavour by Art to supply the loss of the natural charms which now engage him.

Fine hopes of such a wretch's Reformation! I would not, my dear, for the world have any-thing to say—But I need not make resolutions. I have not opened, nor will I open, his Letter.—A sycophant creature!—With his hoarsenesses—got perhaps by a midnight revel, singing to his wild-note singer, and only increased in the coppice!

To be already on a foot!—In *his* esteem, I mean: For myself, I despise him. I hate myself almost for writing so much about *him*, and of such a simpleton as *This sweet pretty girl* as you call her: But nothing can be either *sweet* or *pretty*, that is not modest, that is not virtuous.

And now, my dear, I will tell you, how I came to put you upon this enquiry.

This

This vile *Joseph Leman* had given a hint to *Betty*, and she to *me*, as if *Lovelace* would be found out to be a very bad man, at a place where he had been lately seen in disguise. But he would see further, he said, before he told her more; and she promised *secrecy*, in hope to get at *further intelligence*. I thought it could be no harm, to get you to inform yourself, and me, of what could be gathered (a). And now I see, his enemies are but too well warranted in their reports of him: And, if the ruin of this poor young creature be his aim, and if he had not known her but for his visits to Harlowe-Place, I shall have reason to

(a) It will be seen in Vol. I. Letter xxxiv. that Mr. Lovelace's motive for sparing his *Rosebud* was twofold. First, Because his Pride was gratified by the Grandmother's desiring him to spare her Grand-daughter. *Many a pretty Rogue*, says he, *had I spared, whom I did not spare, had my Power been acknowledged, and my Mercy in time implored. But the Debellare Superbos should be my motto, were I to have a new one.*

His other motive will be explained in the following passage, in the same Letter. *I never was so honest, for so long together, says he, since my matriculation. It behoves me so to be. Some way or other my recess [at this little Inn] may be found out; and it will then be thought that my Rosebud has attracted me. A report in my favour from simplicities so amiable, may establish me, &c.*

Accordingly, as the Reader will hereafter see, Mr. Lovelace finds by the *Effects*, his expectations from the contrivance he set on foot by means of his agent *Joseph Leman* (who plays, as above, upon *Betty Barnes*) fully answered, tho' he could not know what passed on the occasion between the two Ladies.

This explanation is the more necessary to be given, as several of our Readers (thro' want of due attention) have attributed to Mr. Lovelace, on his behaviour to his *Rosebud*, a greater merit than was due to him; and moreover imagined, that it was improbable, that a man, who was capable of acting so generously (as they supposed) in *this* instance, should be guilty of any atrocious villainy. Not considering, that Love, Pride, and Revenge, as he owns in Vol. I. Letter xxxi. were ingredients of equal force in his composition; and that Resistance was a stimulus to him.

be doubly concerned for her ; and doubly incensed against so vile a man.

I think I hate him worse than I do Solmes himself.

But I will not add one other word about him ; after I have told you, that I wish to know, as soon as possible, what further occurs from your inquiry. I have a Letter from him ; but shall not open it till I do : And then, if it come out as I dare say it will, I will directly put the Letter unopened into the place I took it from, and never trouble myself more about him. Adieu, my dearest friend.

CL. HARLOWE.

L E T T E R XII.

Miss HOWE, To Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Friday Noon, March 31.

JUSTICE obliges me to forward This after my last on the wings of the wind, as I may say. I really believe the man is innocent. Of this *one* accusation, I think, he must be acquitted ; and I am sorry I was so forward in dispatching away my intelligence by halves.

I have seen the girl. She is really a very pretty, a very neat, and, what is still a greater beauty, a very innocent young creature. He who could have ruined such an undesigning home-bred, must have been indeed infernally wicked. Her father is an honest simple man ; intirely satisfied with his child, and with her new acquaintance.

I am almost afraid for your heart, when I tell you, that I find, now I have got to the bottom of this enquiry, something noble come out in this Lovelace's favour.

The girl is to be married next week ; and This promoted and brought about by him. He is resolved, her

her Father says, to make one couple happy, and wishes he could make more so [*There's for you, my dear!*]: And having taken a liking also to the young fellow whom she professes to love, he has given her an hundred pounds: The grandmother actually has it in her hands, to answer to the like sum given to the youth by one of his own relations: While Mr. Lovelace's companion, attracted by the example, has given twenty-five guineas to the Father, who is poor, towards cloaths to equip the pretty Rustic.

Mr. Lovelace and his friend, the poor man says, when they first came to his house, affected to appear as *persons of low degree*; but now he knows the one (but mentioned it in confidence) to be Colonel Barrow, the other Capt. Sloane. The Colonel he owns was at first very *sweet upon his girl*: But upon her grandmother's begging of him to spare her innocence, he vowed, that he never would offer any-thing but good counsel to her. He kept his word; and the pretty fool acknowledged, that she never could have been better instructed by the Minister himself from the *Bible-book*!—The girl pleased me so well, that I made her visit to me worth her while.

But what, my dear, will become of us now?—Lovelace not only reformed, but turned preacher!—What will become of us now?—Why, my sweet friend, your *Generosity* is now engaged in his favour!—Fie upon this *Generosity*! I think in my heart, that it does as much mischief to the noble-minded, as *Love* to the ignobler.—What before was only a *conditional Liking*, I am now afraid will turn to *Liking unconditional*.

I could not endure to change my invective into panegyric all at once, and so soon. We, or such as I at least, love to keep ourselves in countenance for a rash judgment, even when we know it to be rash. Every-body has not your generosity in confessing a

mistake. It requires a greatness of soul to do it. So I made still farther enquiry after his life and manners, and behaviour there, in hopes to find something bad : But all uniform !

Upon the whole, Mr. Lovelace comes out with so much advantage from this enquiry, that were there the least room for it, I should suspect the whole to be *a plot set on foot to wash a blackmoor white*. Adieu, my dear.

ANNA HOWE.

L E T T E R XIII.

Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, *To Miss* HOWE.

Saturday, April 1.

HASTY censurers do indeed subject themselves to the charge of variableness and inconsistency in judgment : And so they ought ; for, if you, even you, my dear, were so loth to own a mistake, as in the instance before us you pretend you were, I believe I should not have loved you so well as I really do love you. Nor could you, in that case, have so frankly thrown the reflection I hint at upon yourself, had you not had one of the most ingenuous minds that ever woman boasted.

Mr. Lovelace has faults enow to deserve very severe censure, altho' he be not guilty of this. If I were upon such terms with him as he would wish me to be, I should give him a hint, that this treacherous Joseph Leman cannot be *so much* attached to him, as perhaps he thinks him to be. If he were, he would not have been so ready to report to his disadvantage (and to Betty Barnes too) this slight affair of the pretty Rustic. Joseph has engaged Betty to secrecy ; promising to let her, and her young master too, know more, when he knows the whole of the matter : And this hinders her from mentioning it, as she is nevertheless

theless agog to do, to my Sister or Brother. And then she does not chuse to disoblige Joseph; for altho' she pretends to look above him, she listens, I believe, to some Love Stories he tells her.

Women having it not in their power to *begin* a courtship, some of them very frequently, I believe, lend an *ear* where their *hearts* incline not.

But to say no more of these low people, neither of whom I think tolerably of; I must needs own, that as I should for ever have despised this man, had he been capable of such a vile intrigue in his way to Harlowe-Place, and as I believed he *was* capable of it, it has indeed (I own it has) proportionably engaged my *Generosity*, as you call it, in his favour: Perhaps *more than I may have reason to wish it bad*. And, raily me, as you will, pray tell me fairly, my dear, would it not have had such an effect upon you?

Then the *real* generosity of the act.—I protest, my beloved friend, if he would be good for the rest of his life from this time, I would forgive him a great many of his past errors, were it only for the demonstration he has given in This, that he is *capable* of so good and bountiful a manner of thinking.

You may believe I made no scruple to open his Letter, after the receipt of your second on this subject: Nor shall I of answering it, as I have no reason to find fault with it.—An article in his favour, procured him, however, so much the easier (as I must own) by way of amends for the undue displeasure I took against him; tho' he knows it not.

It is lucky enough that this matter was cleared up to me by your friendly diligence so soon: For had I written before it was, it would have been to reinforce my dismissal of him; and perhaps I should have mentioned the very motive; for it affected me more than I think it ought: And then, what an advantage would

that have given him, when he could have cleared up the matter so happily for himself!

When I send you This Letter of his, you will see how very humble he is: What *acknowledgements* of *natural* impatience: What confession of faults, as you prognosticated.

A very different appearance, I must own, all these make, now the Story of the pretty Rustic is cleared up, to what they would have made, had it not.

You will see how he accounts to me, 'that he ' could not, by reason of indisposition, come for my ' Letter in person; and the forward creature labours ' the point, as if he thought I should be uneasy that ' he did not.' I am indeed sorry he should be ill on my account; and I will allow, that the suspense he has been in for some time past, must have been vexatious enough to so impatient a spirit. But all is owing originally to himself.

You will find him (in the presumption of being forgiven) ' full of contrivances and expedients for my ' escaping the threatened compulsion.'

I have always said, that next to being without fault, is the acknowledgement of a fault; since no amendment can be expected where an error is defended: But you will see, in this very Letter, an haughtiness even in his submissions. 'Tis true, I know not where to find fault as to the expression; yet cannot I be satisfied, that his humility *is* humility; or even an humility upon such conviction as one should be pleased with.

To be sure, he is far from being a polite man: Yet is not directly and characteristically as I may say, *unpolite*. But *his* is such a sort of politeness, as has by a carelessness founded on a very early indulgence, and perhaps on too much success in riper years, and an arrogance built upon both, grown into assuredness, and, of course, as I may say, into indelicacy.

The distance you recommend at which to keep these men, is certainly right in the main : Familiarity destroys reverence : But with whom ?—Not with those, surely, who are prudent, grateful, and generous.

But it is very difficult for persons, who would avoid running into one extreme, to keep clear of another. Hence Mr. Lovelace, perhaps, thinks it the mark of a great spirit to humour his pride, tho' at the expence of his politeness : But can the man be a deep man, who knows not how to make such distinctions as a person of but moderate parts cannot miss ?

He complains heavily of my 'readiness to take mortal offence at him, and to dismiss him for ever : It is a *bigb* conduct, he says he must be frank enough to tell me ; a conduct that must be very far from contributing to allay his apprehensions of the possibility that I may be persecuted into my Relations measures in behalf of Mr. Solmes.'

You will see how he puts his present and his future happiness, 'with regard to both worlds, intirely upon me.' The ardour with which he vows and promises, I think the heart only can dictate : How else can one guess at a man's heart ?

You will also see, 'that he has already heard of the Interview I am to have with Mr. Solmes ;' and with what vehemence and anguish he expresses himself on the occasion.—I intend to take proper notice of the ignoble means he stoops to, to come at his early intelligence out of our family. If persons pretending to principle bear not their testimony against unprincipled actions, what check can they have ?

You will see, how passionately he presses me to oblige him with a few lines, before the interview between Mr. Solmes and me take place' (if, as he says, it *must* take place) 'to confirm his hope, that I have no view, in my present displeasure against *him*, to give encouragement to *Solmes*. An apprehension, he says, that he

‘ he must be excused for repeating : especially as the
 ‘ Interview is a favour granted to that man, which
 ‘ I have refused to him ; since, as he infers, were it
 ‘ not with such an expectation, why should my
 ‘ *friends* press it ?’



I HAVE written ; and to this effect : ‘ That I had
 ‘ never intended to write another line to a man, who
 ‘ could take upon himself to reflect upon my Sex and
 ‘ myself, for having thought fit to make use of my
 ‘ own judgment.

‘ I tell him, That I have submitted to this Inter-
 ‘ view with Mr. Solmes, purely as an act of duty,
 ‘ to shew my friends, that I will comply with their
 ‘ commands as far as I can ; and that I hope, when
 ‘ Mr. Solmes himself shall see how determined I am,
 ‘ he will cease to prosecute a suit, in which it is im-
 ‘ possible he should succeed with my consent.

‘ I assure him, That my aversion to Mr. Solmes
 ‘ is too sincere to permit me to doubt myself on this
 ‘ occasion. But, nevertheless, he must not imagine,
 ‘ that my rejecting of Mr. Solmes is in favour to
 ‘ him. That I value my freedom and independency
 ‘ too much, if my friends will but leave me to my
 ‘ own judgment, to give them up to a man so un-
 ‘ controulable, and who shews me beforehand what
 ‘ I have to expect from him, were I in his power.

‘ I express my high disapprobation of the methods
 ‘ he takes to come at what passes in a private family :
 ‘ The pretence of corrupting other peoples servants
 ‘ by way of reprisal for the Spies they have set upon
 ‘ him, I tell him, is a very poor excuse ; and no other
 ‘ than an attempt to justify one meanness by another.

‘ There is, I observe to him, a *right* and *wrong*
 ‘ in every-thing, let people put what glosses they please
 ‘ upon their actions. To condemn a deviation, and
 ‘ to follow it by as great a one, what, I ask him, is

‘ This,

‘ This, but propagating a general corruption? A
 ‘ Stand must be made by somebody, turn round
 ‘ the evil as many as may, or virtue will be lost :
 ‘ *And shall it not be I*, a worthy mind would ask,
 ‘ that shall make this Stand ?

‘ I leave to him to judge, whether *his* be a wor-
 ‘ thy one, tried by this rule : And whether, know-
 ‘ ing the impetuosity of his own disposition, and the
 ‘ improbability there is that my father and family will
 ‘ ever be reconciled to him, I ought to encourage
 ‘ his hopes ?

‘ These spots and blemishes, I further tell him,
 ‘ give me not earnestness enough for any sake but *his*
 ‘ *own*, to wish him in a juster and nobler train of
 ‘ thinking and acting ; for that I truly despise many
 ‘ of the ways he allows himself in : Our minds are
 ‘ therefore infinitely different : And as to his pro-
 ‘ fessions of Reformation, I must tell him, that pro-
 ‘ fuse acknowledgements, without amendment, are
 ‘ but to me as so many anticipating concessions,
 ‘ which he may find much easier to make, than
 ‘ either to defend himself, or amend his errors.

‘ I inform him, that I have been lately made ac-
 ‘ quainted’ [And so I have by Betty, and she by my
 ‘ Brother] ‘ with the weak and wanton Airs he gives
 ‘ himself of declaiming against Matrimony. I severe-
 ‘ ly reprehend him on this occasion : And ask him,
 ‘ With what view he can take so wit less, so despicable
 ‘ a liberty, in which only the most abandoned of men
 ‘ allow themselves, and yet presume to address *me* ?

‘ I tell him, That if I am obliged to go to my
 ‘ Uncle Antony’s, it is not to be inferred, that I
 ‘ must therefore *necessarily* be Mr. Solmes’s Wife :
 ‘ Since I may not be so sure perhaps that the same
 ‘ exceptions lie so strongly against my quitting a
 ‘ house to which I shall be forcibly carried, as if I
 ‘ left my Father’s house ; And, at the worst, I may
 ‘ be

‘ be able to keep them in suspense till my Cousin
 ‘ Morden comes, who will have a right to put me
 ‘ in possession of my Grandfather’s Estate, if I insist
 ‘ upon it.’

This, I doubt, is somewhat of an artifice ; which can only be excusable, as it is principally designed to keep him out of mischief. For I have but little hope, if carried thither, whether sensible or senseless, if I am left to the mercy of my Brother and Sister, but they will endeavour to force the solemn obligation upon me. Otherwise, were there but any prospect of avoiding this, by delaying (or even by taking things to make me ill, if nothing else would do) till my Cousin comes, I hope I should not think of leaving even my Uncle’s house. For I should not know how to square it to my own principles, to dispense with the duty I owe to my Father, where-ever it shall be his Will to place ~~to~~ me.

But while you give me the charming hope, that, in order to avoid one man, I shall not be under the necessity of throwing myself upon the Friends of the other ; I think my case not absolutely desperate.



I SEE not any of my family, nor hear from them in any way of kindness. This looks as if they themselves expected no great matters from that Tuesday’s conference which makes my heart flutter every time I think of it.

My Uncle Antony’s presence on the occasion I do not much like : But I had rather meet him than my Brother or Sister : Yet my Uncle is very impetuous. I can’t think Mr. Lovelace can be much more so ; at least he cannot *look* Anger, as my Uncle, with his harder features, can. These sea-prospered gentlemen, as my Uncle has often made me think, not used to any but elemental controul, and even ready to buffet That, bluster often as violently as the Winds they are accustomed to be angry at.

CLARISSA HARLOWE. 77

I believe Mr. Solmes will look as much like a fool as I shall do, if it be true, as my Uncle Harlowe writes, and as Betty often tells me, that he is as much afraid of seeing me, as I am of seeing him.

Adieu, my happy, thrice happy Miss Howe, who have no hard terms affixed to your duty!—Who have nothing to do, but to fall in with a choice your Mother has made for you, to which you have not, nor can have, a just objection: Except the frowardness of our Sex, as our free censurers would perhaps take the liberty to say, makes it one, that the choice was your Mother's, at first hand. Perverse nature, we know, loves not to be prescribed to; altho' youth is not so well qualified, either by sedateness or experience, to chuse for itself.

To *know* your own happiness, and that it is *now*, nor to leave it to *after-reflection* to look back upon the *preferable past* with a heavy and self-accusing heart, that you did not chuse it when you might have chosen it, is all that is necessary to complete your felicity!—And this power is wished you by

Your

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

L E T T E R XIV.

Miss Howe, To Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Sunday, April 2.

I Ought yesterday to have acknowledged the receipt of your Parcel: Robin tells me, that the Joseph Leman whom you mention as the traitor, saw him. He was in the poultry-yard, and spoke to Robin over the bank which divides that from the Green-Lane. 'What brings you hither, Mr. Robert?—But I can tell. Hie away, as fast as you can.'

No doubt but their dependence upon this fellow's vigilance, and upon Betty's, leaves you more at liberty

berty in your Airings, than you would otherwise be : But you are the only Person I ever heard of, who in such circumstances had not some faithful servant to trust little offices to. A poet, my dear, would not have gone to work for an Angelica, without giving her her Violetta, her Cleanthe, her Clelia, or some such pretty-named confidante—An old nurse at the least.

I read to my Mother several passages of your Letters. But your last paragraph, in your yesterday's, quite charmed her. You have won her heart by it, she told me. And while her fit of gratitude for it lasted, I was thinking to make my proposal, and to press it with all the earnestness I could give it, when Hickman came in, making his legs, and stroking his cravat and ruffles.

I could most freely have *ruffled* him for it. As it was—Sir, said I, saw you not some of the servants?—Could not one of them have come in before you ?

He begged pardon : Looked as if he knew not whether he had best keep his ground, or withdraw :—Till my Mother, his fast friend, interposed—Why, Nancy, we are not upon particulars.—Pray, Mr. Hickman, sit down.

By your le—ave, good Madam, to me. You know his drawl, when his muscles give him the respectful hesitation.—

Ay, ay, pray sit down, honest man, if you are weary—But by my *mamma*, if you please. I desire my hoop may have its full circumference. All they're good for, that I know, is to clean dirty shoes, and to keep fellows at a distance.

Strange girl ! cried my Mother, displeased ; but with a milder turn, Ay, ay, Mr. Hickman, sit down by *me*, I have no such *forbidding* folly in my dress.

I looked serious ; and in my heart was glad this speech of hers was not made to your uncle Antony.

My

My Mother, with the true Widow's freedom, would mighty prudently had led into the subject we had been upon; and would have had read to him, I question not, that very paragraph in your Letter which is so much in his favour. He was highly obliged to dear Miss Harlowe, she would assure him; that she *did* say—

But I asked him, If he had any news by his last Letters from London—A question which he always understands to be a *subject-changer*; for otherwise I never put it. And so if he be *but* silent, I am not angry with him that he answers it not.

I chuse not to mention my proposal before him, till I know how it will be relished by my Mother. If it be not well received, perhaps I may employ *him* on the occasion. Yet I don't like to owe him an obligation, if I could help it. For men who have his views in their heads, do so parade it, so strut about, if a woman condescend to employ them in her affairs, that one has no patience with them.

However, if I *find* not an opportunity this day, I will *make* one to-morrow.

I shall not open either of your sealed-up Parcels, but in *your* presence. There is no need. Your conduct is out of all question with me: And by the extracts you have given me from his Letters and your own, I know all that relates to the present situation of things between you.

I was going to give you a little flippant hint or two. But since you wish to be thought superior to all our Sex in the command of yourself; and since indeed you deserve to be thought so; I will spare you. You are, however, at times, more than half inclined to speak out. That you do not, is only owing to a little bashful struggle between *you* and *yourself*, as I may say. When that is quite got over, I know you will favour me undisguisedly with the result.

I can-

I cannot forgive your taking upon you (at so extravagant a rate too) to pay my Mother's servant. Indeed I *am*, and I *will be*, angry with you for it. A year's wages at once well nigh! only as, unknown to my Mother, I make it better for the servants according to their merits—How it made the man stare!—And it may be his ruin too, as far as I know. If he should buy a ring, and marry a sorry body in the neighbourhood with the money, one would be loth, a twelvemonth hence, that the poor old fellow should think he had reason to wish the bounty never conferred.

I must give you your way in these things, you say.—And I know there is no contradicting you: For you were ever putting too great a value upon little offices done for *you*, and too little upon the great ones you do for *others*. The satisfaction you have in doing so, I grant it, repays you. But why should you, by the nobleness of your mind, throw reproaches upon the rest of the world? Particularly, upon your own family—and upon ours too?

If, as I have heard you say, it is a good rule to give words the bearing, but to form our judgments of men and things by DEEDS ONLY; what shall we think of one, who seeks to find palliatives in *words*, for narrowness of heart in the very persons her *deeds* so silently, yet so forcibly, reflect upon? Why blush you not, my dear friend, to be thus singular?—When you meet with another person whose mind is like your own, then display your excellencies as you please: But till then, for pity's sake, let your heart and your spirit suffer a little contraction.

I intended to write but a few lines; chiefly to let you know, your Parcels are come safe. And accordingly I began in a large hand; and I am already come to the end of my second sheet. But I could write a quire without hesitation upon a subject so copious

pious and so beloved as is your praise.—Not for *this* single instance of your generosity ; since I am really angry with you for it ; but for the benevolence exemplified in the whole tenor of your life and actions ; of which this is but a common instance. Heaven direct you, in your own arduous trials, is all I have room to add ; and make you as happy, as you think to be

Your own

ANNA HOWE.

LETTER XV.

Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, To Miss HOWE.

Sunday Night, April 2.

I Have many new particulars to acquaint you with that shew a great change in the behaviour of my friends to me. I did not think we had so much Art among us, as I find we have. I will give these particulars to you as they offered.

All the family was at church in the morning. They brought good Dr. Lewen with them, in pursuance of a previous invitation. And the doctor sent up to desire my permission to attend me in my own apartment.

You may believe it was easily granted.

So the doctor came up.

We had a conversation of near an hour before dinner : But, to my surprize, he waved every thing that would have led to the subject I supposed he wanted to talk about. At last, I asked him, If it were not thought strange I should be so long absent from church ? He made me some handsome compliments upon it : But said, for his part, he had ever made it a rule, to avoid interfering in the private concerns of families, unless desired to do so.

I was prodigiously disappointed : But supposing

that he was thought too just a man to be made a judge of in this cause; I led no more to it: Nor, when he was called down to dinner, did he take the least notice of leaving me behind him there.

But this was not the first time since my confinement that I thought it a hardship not to dine below. And when I parted with him on the stairs, a tear would burst its way; and he hurried down; his own good-natured eyes glistening; for he saw it.—Nor trusted he his voice, lest the accent I suppose should have discovered his concern; departing in silence; tho' with his usual graceful obligingness.

I hear, that he praised me, and my part in the conversation that passed between us.—To shew them, I suppose, that it was not upon the interesting subjects which I make no doubt he was desired not to enter upon.

He left me so dissatisfied, yet so perplexed with this new way of treatment, that I never found myself so much disconcerted, and out of my train.

But I was to be more so. This was to be a day of puzzle to me. *Pregnant* puzzle, if I may so say: For there must great meaning lie behind it.

In the afternoon, all but my Brother and Sister went to church with the good doctor; who left his compliments for me. I took a walk in the garden: My Brother and Sister walked in it too, and kept me in their eye a good while, on purpose, as I thought, that I might see how gay and good-humoured they were together. At last they came down the walk that I was coming up, hand-in-hand, Lover-like.

Your servant, Miss—Your servant, Sir—passed between my Brother and me.

Is it not cold-ish, Sister Clary? in a kinder voice than usual, said my Sister, and stopped.—I stopped, and courtesied low to her half-courtesy.—I think not, Sister, said I.

She

She went on. I courtesied without return ; and proceeded ; turning to my poultry-yard.

By a shorter turn, arm-in-arm, they were there before me.

I think, Clary, said my Brother, you must present me with some of this breed, for Scotland.

If you please, Brother.

I'll chuse for you, said my Sister.

And while I fed them, they pointed to half a dozen : Yet intending nothing by it, I believe, but to shew a deal of love and good-humour to each other before me.

My Uncles next (at their return from church) were to do me the honour of *their* notice. They bid Betty tell me, they would drink Tea with me in my own apartment.

Now, thought I, shall I have the subject of next Tuesday enforced upon me.

But they contradicted the Order for Tea, and only my Uncle Harlowe came up to me.

Half-distant, half-affectionate, at his entering my chamber, was the air he put on to his *Daughter-Niece*, as he used to call me ; and I threw myself at his feet, and besought his favour.

None of these discomposures, child. None of these apprehensions. You will now have every-body's favour. All is coming about, my dear. I was impatient to see you. I could no longer deny myself this satisfaction.

He then raised me, and kissed me, and called me, Charming creature !

But he waved entering into any interesting subject. All will be well now. All will be right.—No more complainings ! Every-body loves you !—I only came to make my earliest court to you ! (were his condescending words) and to sit and talk of twenty and twenty fond things, as I used to do.—And let every

past disagreeable thing be forgotten; as if nothing had happened.

He understood me as beginning to hint at the disgrace of my confinement—No disgrace, my dear, can fall to your lot: Your reputation is too well established.—I longed to see you, repeated he—I have seen no-body half so amiable since I saw you last.

And again he kissed my cheek, my glowing cheek; for I was impatient, I was vexed, to be thus, as I thought, played upon: And how could I be thankful for a visit, that (it now was evident) was only a too *bumble* artifice, to draw me in against the next Tuesday, or to leave me inexcusable to them all?

O my cunning Brother!—This is *his* contrivance. And then my anger made me recollect the triumph in his and my Sister's fondness for each other, as practised before me; and the mingled indignation flashing from their eyes, as arm in arm they spoke to me, and the forced condescension playing upon their lips, when they called me Clary, and Sister.

Do you think I could, with these reflections, look upon my Uncle Harlowe's visit as the favour he seemed desirous I should think it to be?—Indeed I could not; and seeing him so studiously avoid all re- crimination, as I may call it, I gave into the affectation; and followed him in his talk of indifferent things: While he seemed to admire This thing and That, as if he had never seen them before; and now-and-then condescendingly kissed the hand that wrought some of the things he fixed his eyes upon; not so much to admire them, as to find subjects to divert what was most in *his* head, and in *my* heart.

At his going away—How can I leave you here by yourself, my dear? You, whose company used to enliven us all. You are not expected down indeed: But I protest I had a good mind to surprise your Father and Mother!—If I thought nothing would
arise

arise that would be disagreeable—My dear, my love ! [O the dear artful gentleman ! How could my Uncle Harlowe so dissemble ?] What say you ? Will you give me your hand ? Will you see your Father ? Can you stand his displeasure, on first seeing the dear creature who has given him and all of us so much disturbance ? Can you promise future—

He saw me rising in my temper—Nay, my dear, interrupting himself, if you cannot be all resignation, I would not have you think of it.

My heart, struggling between duty and warmth of temper, was full. You know, my dear, I never could bear to be dealt meanly with !—How—how *can* you, Sir ! You, my Papa-Uncle—How *can* you, Sir !—The poor girl !—For I could not speak with connexion.

Nay, my dear, if you cannot be all duty, all resignation—better stay where you are.—But after the Instance you have given—

Instance I have given !— What Instance, Sir ?

Well, well, child, better stay where you are, if your past confinement hangs so heavy upon you—But now there will be a sudden end to it.—Adieu, my dear !—Three words only—Let your compliance be sincere !—And love me, as you used to love me—Your Grandfather did not do so much for you, as I will do for you.

Without suffering me to reply, he hurried away, as I thought, like one who had been employed to act a part against his will, and was glad it was over.

Don't you see, my dear Miss Howe, how they are all determined ?—Have I not reason to dread next Tuesday ?

Up presently after came my Sister :—To observe, I suppose, the way I was in.

She found me in tears.

Have you not a Thomas à Kempis, Sister? with a stiff air.

I have, Madam.

Madam! How long are we to be at this distance, Clary?

No longer, my dear Bella, if you allow me to call you Sister. And I took her hand.

No fawning neither, girl!

I withdrew my hand as hastily, as you may believe I should have done, had I, in feeling for one of your parcels under the wood, been bitten by a Viper.

I beg pardon, said I—Too, too ready to make advances, I am always subjecting myself to contempts.

People who know not how to keep a middle behaviour, said she, must ever-more do so.

I will fetch you the Kempis, Sister. I did. Here it is. You will find excellent things, Bella, in that little book.

I wish, retorted she, you had profited by them.

I wish you may, said I. *Example* from a Sister older than one's self is a fine thing.

Older! Saucy little fool!—And away she flung.

What a captious old woman will my Sister make, if she live to be one!—demanding the reverence, perhaps, yet not aiming at the merit; and ashamed of the years that only can intitle her to the reverence.

It is plain from what I have related, that they think they have got me at some advantage by obtaining my consent to this Interview: But if it were not, Betty's impertinence just now would make it evident. She has been complimenting me upon it; and upon the visit of my Uncle Harlowe. She says, The difficulty now is more than half over with me. She is sure I would not see Mr. Solmes, but to have him.

him. Now shall she be soon better employed than of late she has been. All hands will be at work. She loves dearly to have weddings go forward!—Who knows, whose turn will be next?

I found in the afternoon a Reply to my Answer to Mr. Lovelace's Letter. It is full of promises, full of vows of gratitude, of *eternal* gratitude, is his word, among others still more hyperbolic. Yet Mr. Lovelace, the *least* of any man whose Letters I have seen, runs into those elevated absurdities. I should be apt to despise him for it, if he did. Such language looks always to me, as if the flatterer thought to *find* a woman a fool, or hoped to *make* her one.

‘ He regrets my indifference to him ; which puts
‘ all the hope he has in my favour upon the shocking
‘ usage I receive from my friends.

‘ As to my charge upon him of unpoliteness and
‘ uncontrollableness— What (he asks) can he say ?
‘ Since being unable absolutely to vindicate himself,
‘ he has too much ingenuity to attempt to do so :
‘ Yet is struck dumb by my harsh construction; that
‘ his acknowledging temper is owing more to his
‘ carelessness to defend himself, than to his inclination
‘ to amend. He had never *before* met with
‘ the objections against his morals which I had raised,
‘ *justly* raised : And he was resolved to obviate
‘ them. What is it, he asks, that he has promised,
‘ but reformation by my example ? And what occasion
‘ for the promise, if he had not faults, and
‘ those very great ones, to reform ? He hopes, acknowledgment
‘ of an error is no bad sign ; altho’
‘ my severe virtue has interpreted it into one.

‘ He believes, I may be right (*severely* right, he
‘ calls it) in my judgment against making reprisals in
‘ the case of the intelligence he receives from my family :
‘ He cannot charge himself to be of a temper
‘ that leads him to be inquisitive into any-body’s pri-

‘ vate affairs ; but hopes, that the circumstances of
 ‘ the case, and the strange conduct of my friends,
 ‘ will excuse him ; especially, when so much depends
 ‘ upon his knowing the movements of a family so
 ‘ violently bent, by measures right or wrong, to
 ‘ carry their point against me, in malice to him.
 ‘ People he says, who act like Angels, ought to have
 ‘ Angels to deal with. For his part, he has not yet
 ‘ learned the difficult lesson of returning *good for*
 ‘ *evil* : And shall think himself the less encouraged
 ‘ to learn it by the treatment I have met with from
 ‘ the very persons, who would trample upon him,
 ‘ as they do upon me, were he to lay himself under
 ‘ their feet.

‘ He excuses himself for the liberties he owns he
 ‘ has heretofore taken in ridiculing the Marriage-
 ‘ state. It is a subject, he says, that he has not of
 ‘ late treated so lightly. He owns it to be so trite,
 ‘ so beaten a topic with all Libertines and Witlings ;
 ‘ so frothy, so empty, so nothing-meaning, so worn-
 ‘ out a theme, that he is heartily ashamed of him-
 ‘ self, ever to have made it *his*. He condemns it as
 ‘ a stupid reflection upon the Laws and Good Order
 ‘ of Society, and upon a man’s own Ancestors : And
 ‘ in himself who has some reason to value himself
 ‘ upon his descent and alliances, more censurable,
 ‘ than in those who have not the same advantage to
 ‘ boast of. He promises to be more circumspect
 ‘ than ever, both in his words and actions, that he
 ‘ may be more and more worthy of my approba-
 ‘ tion ; and that he may give an assurance before-
 ‘ hand, that a foundation is laid in his mind for my
 ‘ example to work upon with equal reputation and
 ‘ effect to us both ;— If he may be so happy as to
 ‘ call me his.

‘ He gives me up, as absolutely lost, if I go to
 ‘ my Uncle Antony’s : The close confinement ; The
 ‘ Moated-

‘ Moated-house ; The Chapel ; The implacableness
 ‘ of my Brother and Sister, and their power over the
 ‘ rest of my family, he sets forth in strong lights ;
 ‘ and plainly says, that he must have a struggle to
 ‘ prevent my being carried thither.’

Your kind, your generous endeavours to interest
 your Mother in my behalf, will, I hope, prevent
 those harsher extremities to which I might be other-
 wise driven. And to you I will fly, if permitted,
 and keep all my promises, of not corresponding with
 any-body, not seeing any-body, but by your Mo-
 ther’s direction and yours.

I will close and deposit at This place. It is not
 necessary to say, How much I am

Your ever-affectionate and obliged

CL. HARLOWE.

L E T T E R X V I.

Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, To Miss HOWE.

I Am glad my Papers are safe in your hands. I will
 make it my endeavour to deserve your good opi-
 nion, that I may not at once disgrace your judg-
 ment, and my own heart.

I have another Letter from Mr. Lovelace. He is
 extremely apprehensive of the meeting I am to have
 with Mr. Solmes to-morrow. He says, ‘ That the
 ‘ airs that wretch gives himself on the occasion, add
 ‘ to his concern ; and it is with infinite difficulty
 ‘ that he prevails upon himself not to make him a
 ‘ visit to let him know what he may expect, if com-
 ‘ pulsion be used towards me in his favour. He
 ‘ assures me, That Solmes has actually talked with
 ‘ tradesmen of new equipages, and names the peo-
 ‘ ple in town with whom he has treated : That he
 ‘ has even’ [Was there ever such a horrid wretch !]

‘ allotted

‘allotted This and That apartment in his house, for
‘a Nurfery, and other offices.’

How shall I bear to hear such a creature talk of
Love to me? I shall be out of all patience with him.
Besides, I thought that he did not dare to make or
talk of these impudent preparations—So inconsistent
as such are with my Brother’s views— But I fly the
subject.

Upon this confidence of Solmes, you will less won-
der at that of Lovelace, ‘in pressing me in the name
‘of all his family, to escape from so determined a
‘violence as is intended to be offered to me at my
‘Uncle’s: That the forward contriver should pro-
‘pose Lord M’s chariot and Six to be at the stile
‘that leads up to the lonely coppice adjoining to our
‘paddock. You will see how audaciously he men-
‘tions Settlements ready drawn; horsemen ready to
‘mount; and one of his Cousins Montague to be
‘in the chariot, or at the George in the neighbour-
‘ing village, waiting to accompany me to Lord
‘M’s, or to Lady Betty’s or Lady Sarah’s, or to
‘Town, as I please; and upon such orders, or con-
‘ditions, and under such restrictions as to himself,
‘as I shall prescribe.’

You will see how he threatens, ‘To watch and
‘way-lay them, and to *rescue* me as he calls it, by an
‘armed force of friends and servants, if they at-
‘tempt to carry me against my will to my Uncle’s;
‘and this, whether I give my consent to the enter-
‘prize, or not:— Since he shall have no hopes if I
‘am once there.’

O my dear friend! Who can think of these things,
and not be extremely miserable in her apprehen-
sions!

This mischievous Sex! What had I to do with any
of them; or they with me?— I had deserved This,
were it by my own seeking, by my own giddiness,
that

that I had brought myself into this situation—I wish with all my heart— But how foolishly we are apt to wish when we find ourselves unhappy, and know not how to help ourselves.

On your Mother's goodness, however, is my reliance. If I can but avoid being precipitated on either hand, till my Cousin Morden arrives, a Reconciliation must follow; and all will be happy.

I have deposited a Letter for Mr. Lovelace; in which ' I charge him, as he would not disoblige me
' for ever, to avoid any rash step, any visit to Mr.
' Solmes, which may be followed by acts of vio-
' lence.'

I re-assure him, ' That I will sooner die than be
' that man's wife.

' Whatever be my usage, whatever shall be the
' result of the apprehended Interview, I insist upon
' it that he presume not to offer violence to any of
' my friends: And express myself highly displeased,
' that he should presume upon such an interest in my
' esteem, as to think himself intitled to dispute my
' Father's Authority in my removal to my Uncle's;
' altho' I tell him, that I will omit neither prayers
' nor contrivance, even to the making of myself ill,
' to avoid going.'

To-morrow is Tuesday!— How soon comes upon us the day we dread!— O that a deep sleep of twenty-four hours would seize my faculties!— But then the next day would be Tuesday, as to all the effects and purposes for which I so much dread it. If this reach you before the event of the so much apprehended Interview can be known, pray for

Your

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

L E T-

LETTER XVII.

Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, To Miss HOWE.

Tuesday Morning, Six o'Clock.

THE day is come!— I wish it were happily over. I have had a wretched night. Hardly a wink have I slept, ruminating upon the approaching Interview. The very distance of time to which they consented, has added solemnity to the meeting, which otherwise it would not have had.

A thoughtful mind is not a blessing to be coveted, unless it had such a happy vivacity with it, as yours: A vivacity, which enables a person to enjoy the *present*, without being over-anxious about the *future*.

Tuesday, Eleven o'Clock.

I HAVE had a visit from my Aunt Hervey. Betty, in her alarming way, told me, I should have a Lady to breakfast with me, whom I little expected; giving me to believe it was my Mother. This fluttered me so much, on hearing a Lady coming up-stairs, supposing it was she (and not knowing how to account for her motives in such a visit, after I had been so long banished from her presence) that my Aunt, at her entrance, took notice of my disorder; and after her first salutation,

Why, Miss, said she, you seem surpris'd.—Upon my word, you thoughtful young Ladies have strange apprehensions about nothing at all. What, taking my hand, can be the matter with you?—Why, my dear, tremble, tremble, tremble at this rate? You'll not be fit to be seen by any-body. Come, my Love, kissing my cheek, pluck up a courage. By this needless flutter on the approaching Interview, when it is over, you will judge of your other antipathies, and
laugh

laugh at yourself for giving way to so apprehensive an imagination.

I said, that whatever we strongly imagined, was, in its effects at the time, *more* than imaginary, altho' to others it might not appear so: That I had not rested one hour all night: That the impertinent set over me, by giving me room to think my Mother was coming up, had so much disconcerted me, that I should be very little qualified to see any-body I disliked to see.

There was no accounting for those things, she said. Mr. Solmes last night supposed he should be under as much agitation as I could be.

Who is it, then, Madam, that so reluctant an Interview on *both* sides, is to please?

Both of you, my dear, I hope, after the first flurries are over. The most apprehensive beginnings, I have often known, make the happiest conclusions.

There can be but one happy conclusion to the intended visit; and that is, That both sides may be satisfied it will be the last.

She then represented, how unhappy it would be for me, if I did not suffer myself to be prevailed upon: She pressed me to receive Mr. Solmes as became my Education: And declared, that his apprehensions on the Expectation he had of seeing me, were owing to his Love and his Awe; intimating, That True Love was best known by Fear and Reverence; and that no blustering, braving Lover could deserve encouragement.

To this I answered, That constitution was to be considered: That a man of spirit would act like one, and could do nothing meanly: That a creeping mind would creep in every-thing, where it had a view to obtain a benefit by it; and insult, where it had power, and nothing to expect: That this was not a point now to be determined with me: That I had said as
much

much as I could possibly say on this subject: That this Interview was imposed upon me: By those, indeed, who had a right to impose it: But that it was sorely against my will complied with; and for this reason, That there was *aversion*, not *wilfulness*, in the case; and so nothing could come of it, but a pretence, as I much apprehended, to use me still more severely than I had been used.

She was then pleased to charge me with prepossession and prejudice. She expatiated upon the duty of a child. She imputed to me abundance of fine qualities; but told me, that, in this case, *that* of persuadableness was wanting to crown All. She insisted upon the *merit* of obedience, altho' my will were *not* in it. From a little hint I gave of my still greater dislike to see Mr. Solmes on account of the freedom I had treated him with, she talked to me of his forgiving disposition; of his infinite respect for me; and I cannot tell what of this sort.

I never found myself so fretful in my life: And so I told my Aunt; and begged her pardon for it. But she said, it was well disguised then; for she saw nothing but little tremors, which were usual with young Ladies when they were to see their Admirers for the *first* time; and this might be called so, with respect to me; since it was the first time I had consented to see Mr. Solmes in that light.—But that the *next*—

How, Madam, interrupted I—Is it then imagined, that I give this meeting on that foot?—

To be sure it is, child.

To be sure it is, Madam!—Then I do yet desire to decline it.—I will not, I cannot, see him, if he expects me to see him upon those terms.

Niceness, punctilio—Mere punctilio, Niece!—Can you think that your appointment (Day, Place, Hour) and knowing what the intent of it was, is to be interpreted away as a mere ceremony, and to mean nothing?

nothing?—Let me tell you, my dear, your Father, Mother, Uncles, Every-body, respect this appointment as the first act of your compliance with their wills: And therefore recede not, I desire you; but make a merit of what cannot be avoided.

O the hideous wretch!—Pardon me, Madam,—*I* to be supposed to meet such a man as *that*, with such a view! and *he* to be armed with such an expectation!—But it cannot be that *he* expects it, whatever *others* may do.—It is plain he cannot, by the fear he tells you all, he shall have to see me. If his *hope* were so audacious, he could not *fear* so much.

Indeed, he *has* this hope; and justly founded too. But his fear arises from his reverence, as I told you before.

His *reverence*!—his unworthiness!—'Tis so apparent, that even he himself sees it, as well as every-body else. Hence his offers to purchase me!—Hence it is, that Settlements are to make up for acknowledged want of merit!—

His *unworthiness*, say you!—Not so fast, my dear. Does not this look like setting a high value upon yourself?—We all have exalted notions of your merit, Niece; but nevertheless, it would not be wrong, if you were to arrogate less to yourself; tho' more were to be your due than your friends attribute to you.

I am sorry, Madam, it should be thought arrogance in me, to suppose I am not worthy of a better man than Mr. Solmes, both as to person and mind: And as to fortune, I thank God I despise all that can be insisted upon in his favour from so poor a plea.

She told me, It signified nothing to talk: I knew the expectation of every-one.

Indeed I did not. It was impossible I could think of such a strange expectation, upon a compliance
made

made only to shew I would comply in all that was in my power to comply with.

I might easily, she said, have supposed, that every one thought I was beginning to oblige them all, by the kind behaviour of my Brother and Sister to me in the garden, last Sunday; by my Sister's visit to me afterwards in my chamber (altho' *both more stiffly received by me*, than were either wished or expected); by my Uncle Harlowe's affectionate visit to me the same afternoon, not indeed *so very gratefully received* as I used to receive his favours:—But this he kindly imputed to the displeasure I had conceived at my confinement, and to my intention to come off by degrees, that I might keep myself in countenance for my past opposition.

See, my dear, the low cunning of that Sunday-management, which then so much surprised me! And see the reason why Dr. Lewen was admitted to visit me, yet forbore to enter upon a subject about which I thought he came to talk to me!—For, it seems, there was no occasion to dispute with me on the point I was to be *supposed* to have conceded to.—See, also, how unfairly my Brother and Sister must have represented their pretended kindness, when (tho' they had an end to answer by *appearing* kind) their antipathy to me seems to have been *so* strong, that they could not help insulting me by their arm-in-arm Lover-like behaviour to each other; as my Sister afterwards likewise did, when she came to borrow my Kempis.

I lifted up my hands and eyes! I cannot, said I, give *this* treatment a name! The *end* so-unlikely to be answered by *means* so low! I know *whose* the whole is! He that could get my Uncle Harlowe to contribute his part, and procure the acquiescence of the rest of my friends to it, must have the power to do anything with them against me.

Again

Again my Aunt told me, that talking and invective, now I had given the expectation, would signify nothing. She hoped I would not shew every one, that they had been too forward in their constructions of my desire to oblige them. She could assure me, that it would be worse for me, if *now* I receded, than if I had never advanced.

Advanced, Madam! How can you say *advanced*? Why, this is a trick upon me! A poor low trick! Pardon me, Madam, I don't say you have a hand in it.—But, my dearest Aunt, tell me, Will not my Mother be present at this dreaded Interview? Will she not so far favour me? Were it but to qualify—

Qualify, my dear, interrupted she—your Mother, and your Uncle Harlowe would not be present on this occasion for the world—

O then, Madam, how can they look upon my consent to this Interview as an *advance*?

My Aunt was displeased at this home push. Miss Clary, said she, there is no dealing with you. It would be happy for you, and for every-body else, were your obedience as ready as your wit. I will leave you—

Not in anger, I hope, Madam, interrupted I—All I meant was, to observe, that let the meeting issue as it may, and as it *must* issue, it cannot be a disappointment to *any-body*.

O Miss! you seem to be a very determined young creature. Mr. Solmes will be here at your time: And remember once more, that upon the coming afternoon depends the peace of your whole family, and your own happiness.

And so saying, down she hurried.

Here I will stop. In what way I shall resume, or when, is not left to me to conjecture; much less determine. I am excessively uneasy!—No good news

from your Mother, I doubt!—I will deposit thus far, for fear of the worst.

Adieu, my best, rather, my *only* friend!

CL. HARLOWE.

LETTER XVIII.

Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, To Miss HOWE.

Tuesday Evening; and continued thro' the Night.

WELL, my dear, I am alive, and here! But how long I shall be either here, or alive, I cannot say. I have a vast deal to write; and perhaps shall have little time for it. Nevertheless, I must tell you how the saucy Betty again discomposed me, when she came up with this Solmes's message; altho', as you will remember from my last, I was in a way before that wanted no additional surprizes.

Miss! Miss! Miss! cried she, as fast as she could speak, with her arms spread abroad, and all her fingers distended, and held up, will you be pleased to walk down into your own parlour?—There is every-body, I will assure you, in full *congregation*!—And there is Mr. Solmes, as fine as a Lord, with a charming white peruke, fine laced shirt and ruffles, coat trimmed with silver, and a waistcoat standing an end with lace!—Quite handsome, believe me!—You never saw such an alteration!—Ah! Miss, shaking her head, 'tis pity you have said so much against him!—But you know how to come off, for all that!—I hope it will not be too late!—

Impertinence! said I—Wert thou bid to come up in this fluttering way?—And I took up my fan, and fanned myself.

Bless me! said she, how soon these fine young Ladies will be put into *flusterations*!—I meant not either to offend or frighten you, I am sure.—

Every-

Every-body there, do you say?—Who do you call every-body?—

Why, Miss, holding out her left palm opened, and with a flourish, and a saucy leer, patting it with the fore-finger of the other, at every mentioned person, There is your Papa!—There is your Mamma!—There is your Uncle Harlowe!—There is your Uncle Antony!—Your Aunt Hervey!—My young Lady!—And my young Master!—And Mr. Solmes, with the air of a great Courtier, standing up, because he named you:—Mrs. Betty, said he (Then the ape of a wretch bowed, and scraped, as awkwardly as I suppose the person did whom she endeavoured to imitate) Pray give my humble service to Miss, and tell her, I wait her commands.

Was not this a wicked wench? I trembled so, I could hardly stand. I was spiteful enough to say, that her young mistress, I supposed, bid her put on these airs, to frighten me out of a capacity of behaving so calmly as should procure me my Uncle's compassion.

What a way do you put yourself in, Miss, said the Insolent!—Come, dear Madam, taking up my fan, which I had laid down, and approaching me with it, fanning, shall I—

None of thy impertinence!—But say you, *all* my friends are below with him? And am I to *appear* before them *all*?—

I can't tell if they'll stay when you come. I think they seemed to be moving when Mr. Solmes gave me his orders.—But what answer shall I carry to the Squire?

Say, I can't go!—But yet when 'tis over, 'tis over!—Say, I'll wait upon—I'll attend—I'll come presently—Say any-thing; I care not what—But give me my fan, and fetch me a glass of water—

She went, and I fanned myself all the time, for I was in a flame; and hemmed, and struggled with myself all I could; and, when she returned, drank my water; and finding no hope presently of a quieter heart, I sent her down, and followed her with precipitation; trembling so, that, had I not hurried, I question if I could have gone down at all.—O, my dear, what a poor, passive machine is the body when the mind is disordered!

There are two doors to my parlour, as I used to call it. As I entered at one, my friends hurried out at the other. I saw just the gown of my Sister, the last who slid away. My Uncle Antony went out with them; but he staid not long, as you shall hear: And they all remained in the next parlour, a wainscot partition only parting the two. I remember them both in one: But they were separated in favour of us girls, for each to receive her visitors in at her pleasure.

Mr. Solmes approached me as soon as I entered, cringing to the ground, a visible confusion in every feature of his face. After half a dozen choaked-up Madams,—He was very sorry—He was very much concerned—It was his misfortune—And there he stopped, being unable presently to complete a sentence.

This gave me a little more presence of mind. Cowardice in a foe begets courage in one's-self—I see that plainly now—Yet perhaps, at bottom, the new-made bravo is a greater coward than the other.

I turned from him, and seated myself in one of the fire-side chairs, fanning myself. I have since recollected, that I must have looked very saucily. Could I have had any *thoughts* of the man, I should have despised myself for it. But what can be said in the case of an aversion so perfectly sincere?

He hemmed five or six times, as I had done above;
and

and these produced a sentence—That I could not but see his confusion. This sentence produced two or three more. I believe my Aunt had been his tutoreſs; For it was his awe, his reverence for ſo ſuperlative a Lady (I aſſure you). And he hoped—he hoped—three times he hoped, before he told me what—At laſt it came out, that I was too generous (Generoſity, he ſaid, was my character) to deſpiſe him for ſuch—for ſuch—for ſuch—*true* tokens of his Love.

I do indeed ſee you under ſome confusion, Sir; and this gives me hope, that altho' I have been compelled, as I may call it, to give way to this Interview, it may be attended with happier effects than I had apprehended from it.

He had hemmed himſelf into more courage.

You could not, Madam, imagine any creature ſo blind to your merits, and ſo little attracted by them, as eaſily to forego the intereſt and approbation he was honoured with by your worthy family, while he had any hope given him, that one day he might, by his perseverance and zeal, expect your favour.

I am but too much aware, Sir, that it is upon the intereſt and approbation you mention, that you build ſuch hope. It is impoſſible, otherwiſe, that a man, who has any regard for his *own* happineſs, would perſevere againſt ſuch declarations as I have made, and think myſelf obliged to make, in juſtice to you, as well as to myſelf.

He had ſeen many inſtances, he told me, and had heard of more, where Ladies had ſeemed as averſe, and yet had been induced, ſome by motives of compaſſion, others by perſuaſion of friends, to change their minds; and had been very happy afterwards: And he hoped this might be the caſe here.

I have no notion, Sir, of compliment, in an article of ſuch importance as this: Yet am I ſorry to be obliged to ſpeak my mind ſo plainly, as I am going

to do.—Know then, that I have invincible objections, Sir, to your address. I have avowed them with an earnestness that I believe is without example: And why?—Because I believe it is without example, that any young creature, circumstanced as I am, was ever treated as I have been treated on your account.

It is hoped, Madam, that your consent may in time be obtained—*That* is the hope; and I shall be a miserable man if it cannot.

Better, Sir, give me leave to say, you were miserable by yourself, than that you should make two so.

You may have heard, Madam, things to my disadvantage. No man is without enemies. Be pleased to let me know *what* you have heard, and I will either own my faults, and amend; or I will convince you, that I am basely *bespattered*: And once I understand you overheard something that I should say, that gave you offence: Unguardedly, perhaps; but nothing but what shewed my value, and that I would persist so long as I could have hope.

I have indeed heard many things to your disadvantage:—And I was far from being pleased with what I overheard fall from your lips: But as you were not any-thing to me, and never could be, it was not for me to be concerned about the one or the other.

I am sorry, Madam, to hear this. I am sure you should not tell me of any fault, that I would be unwilling to correct in myself.

Then, Sir, correct *this* fault—Do not wish to have a young creature compelled in the most material article of her life, for the sake of motives she despises; and in behalf of a person she cannot value: One that has, in her own right, sufficient to set her above all your offers, and a spirit that craves no more than what it *has*, to make itself easy and happy.

I don't see, Madam, how you would be happy, if I were to discontinue my address: For—

That

That is nothing to you, Sir, interrupted I: Do you but withdraw your pretensions: And if it be thought fit to start up another man for my punishment, the blame will not lie at your door. You will be intitled to my thanks; and most heartily will I thank you.

He paused, and seemed a little at a loss: And I was going to give him still stronger and more personal instances of my plain-dealing; when in came my Uncle Antony.

So, Niece, so!—Sitting in State like a Queen, giving Audience! *baughty* Audience!—Mr. Solmes, why stand you thus humbly?—Why this distance, man? I hope to see you upon a more intimate footing before we part.

I arose, as soon as he entered—and approached him with a bent knee: Let me, Sir, reverence my Uncle, whom I have not for so long a time seen!—Let me, Sir, bespeak your favour and compassion!

You'll have the favour of every-body, Niece, when you know how to deserve it.

If ever I deserved it, I deserve it now.—I have been hardly used—I have made proposals that ought to be accepted, and such as would not have been *asked* of me. What have I done, that I must be banished and confined thus disgracefully? That I must not be allowed to have any free-will in an article that concerns my present and future happiness?—

Miss Clary, replied my Uncle, you have had your will in every-thing till now; and this makes your Parents wills sit so heavy upon you.

My will, Sir! Be pleased to allow me to ask, What was my will till now, but my Father's will, and Yours and my Uncle Harlowe's will?—Has it not been my pride to obey and oblige?—I never asked a favour, that I did not first sit down and consider, if it were *fit* to be granted. And now, to

shew my obedience, have I not offered to live Single? Have I not offered to divest myself of my Grandfather's bounty, and to cast myself upon my Father's; and that to be withdrawn, whenever I disoblige him? Why, dear good Sir, am I to be made unhappy in a point so concerning to my happiness?

Your Grandfather's Estate is not wished from you. You are not desired to live a Single Life. You know *our* Motives, and we guess at *yours*. And, let me tell you, well as we love you, we would much sooner chuse to follow you to the grave, than that *yours* should take place.

I will engage never to marry any man, without my Father's consent, and Yours, Sir, and Everybody's. Did I ever give you cause to doubt my word?—And here I will take the solemnest Oath that can be offered me—

That is the matrimonial one, interrupted he, with a big voice—And to this gentleman.—It shall, it shall, Cousin Clary!—And the more you oppose it, the worse it shall be for you.

This, and before the man, who seemed to assume courage upon it, highly provoked me.

Then, Sir, you shall sooner follow me to the grave *indeed*.—I will undergo the cruellest death—I will even consent to enter into the awful vault of my ancestors, and to have that bricked up upon me, rather than consent to be miserable for life.—And, Mr. Solmes, turning to him, take notice of what I say: *This* or *any* death, I will sooner undergo (That will soon be over) than be yours, and for *ever* unhappy!

My Uncle was in a terrible rage upon this. He took Mr. Solmes by the hand, shocked as the man seemed to be, and drew him to the window—Don't be surpris'd, Mr. Solmes, don't be concerned at *this*. We know, and rapt out a sad oath, what women will say in their wrath: The wind is not more boisterous,

rous, nor more changeable; and again he swore to That.—If you think it worth your while to wait for such an ungrateful girl as This, I'll engage she'll *veer about*; I'll engage she *shall*. And a third time violently swore to it.

Then coming up to me (who had thrown myself, very much disordered by my vehemence, into the most distant window) as if he would have beat me; his face violently working, his Hands clenched, and his teeth set—Yes, yes, yes, hissed the poor gentleman, you shall, you shall, you shall, Cousin Clary, be Mr. Solmes's wife; we will see that you shall; and this in one week at farthest.—And then a fourth time he confirmed it.—Poor gentleman! how he swore!

I am sorry, Sir, said I, to see you in such a passion. All This, I am but too sensible, is owing to my Brother's instigation; who would not himself give the instance of duty that is sought to be exacted from me. It is best for me to withdraw. I shall but provoke you farther, I fear: For altho' I would gladly obey you if I could, yet This is a point determined with me; and I cannot so much *as wish* to get it over.

How could I avoid making these strong declarations, the man in presence?

I was going out at the door I came in at; the gentlemen looking upon one another, as if referring to each other what to do, or whether to engage my stay, or suffer me to go; and who should I meet at the door but my Brother, who had heard all that had passed!

He bolted upon me so unexpectedly, that I was surprised. He took my hand, and grasped it with violence, Return, pretty Miss, said he; return, if you please. You shall not yet be *bricked up*.—Your *instigating* Brother shall save you from That!—O thou

thou fallen angel, said he, peering up to my down-cast face—such a sweetness *here*!—and such an obstinacy *there*! tapping my neck—O thou true woman—tho' so young!—But you shall not have your Rake: Remember that; in a loud whisper, as if he would be decently indecent before the man. You shall be redeemed, and this worthy gentleman, raising his voice, will be so good as to redeem you from ruin—and hereafter you will bless him, or have reason to bless him, for his *condescension*; that was the brutal Brother's word!

He had led me up to meet Mr. Solmes, whose hand he took, as he held mine. Here, Sir, said he, take the rebel Daughter's hand: I give it you now: She shall confirm the gift in a week's time; or will have neither Father, Mother, nor Uncles, to boast of.

I snatched my hand away.

How now, Miss!—

And how now, Sir!—What right have *You* to dispose of my hand?—If you govern every-body else, you shall not govern me; especially in a point so immediately relative to myself, and in which you neither have, nor ever shall have, any-thing to do.

I would have broken from him; but he held my hand too fast.

Let me go, Sir!—Why am I thus treated?—You *design*, I doubt not, with your unmanly gripeings, to hurt me, as you do: But again I ask, Wherefore is it that I am to be thus treated by *You*?

He tossed my hand from him with a whirl, that pained my very shoulder. I wept, and held my other hand to the part.

Mr. Solmes blamed him. So did my Uncle.

He had no patience, he said, with such a perverse one; and to think of my reflections upon himself, before he entered. He had only given me back the hand,

hand, I had not deserved he should touch. It was one of my arts to pretend to be pained.

Mr. Solmes said, He would sooner give up all his hopes of me, than that I should be used unkindly : And he offered to plead in my behalf to them both ; and applied himself with a bow, as if for my approbation of his interposition.

Interpose not, Mr. Solmes, said I, to save me from my Brother's violence. I cannot wish to owe an obligation to a man whose ungenerous perseverance is the occasion of *that* violence, and of all my disgraceful sufferings.

How generous in you, Mr. Solmes, said my Brother, to interpose so kindly in behalf of such an immoveable spirit ! I beg of you to persist in your address !—The unnatural Brother called it *address* !—For all our family's sake, and for *her* sake too, if you love her, persist !—Let us save her, if possible, from ruining herself. Look at her person ! (and he gazed at me, from head to foot, pointing at me, as he referred to Mr. Solmes) Think of her fine qualities !—All the world confesses them, and we all gloried in her till now. She is worth saving ; and, after two or three more struggles, she will be yours, and, take my word for it, will reward your patience. Talk not, therefore, of giving up your hopes, for a little whineing folly. She has entered upon a parade, which she knows not how to quit with a *female* grace. You have only her pride and her obstinacy to encounter : And, depend upon it, you will be as happy a man in a fortnight, as a married man *can* be.

You have heard me say, my dear, that my Brother has always taken a liberty to reflect upon our Sex, and upon Matrimony !—He would not, if he did not think it *Wit* to do so !—Just as poor Mr. Wyerley, and others, whom we both know, profane

fane and ridicule Scripture ; and all to evince their pretensions to the same pernicious talent, and to have it thought, that they are too wise to be religious.

Mr. Solmes, with a self-satisfied air, presumptuously said, He would suffer every-thing, to *oblige* my family, and to *save* me : And doubted not to be amply rewarded, could he be so happy as to succeed at last.

Mr. Solmes, said I, if you have any regard for your own happiness (*Mine* is out of the question with you : You have not generosity enough to make *That* any part of your scheme) prosecute no further your *address*, as my Brother calls it. It is but *just* to tell you, that I could not bring my heart so much as to *think* of you, without the utmost disapprobation, *before* I was used as I have been :—And can you think I am such a slave, such a *poor* slave, as to be brought to change my mind by the violent usage I have met with ?

And you, Sir, turning to my Brother, if you think that *meekness* always indicates *tameness* ; and that there is no *magnanimity* without *bluster* ; own yourself mistaken for once : For you shall have reason to judge from henceforth, that a generous mind is not to be forced ; and that—

No more, said the imperious wretch, I charge you ! lifting up his hands and eyes. Then turning to my Uncle, Do you hear, Sir ? This is your once faultless Niece ! This is your favourite !

Mr. Solmes looked as if he knew not what to think of the matter ; and had I been left alone with him, I saw plainly I could have got rid of him easily enough.

My Uncle came to me, looking up also to my face, and down to my feet : And is it possible This can be *you* ? All this violence from *you*, Miss Clary ?

Yes,

Yes, it *is* possible, Sir—And, I will presume to say, this vehemence on my side is but the natural consequence of the usage I have met with, and the rudeness I am treated with, even in your presence, by a Brother, who has no more right to controul me, than I have to controul him.

This usage, Cousin Clary, was not till all other means were tried with you.

Tried! to what end, Sir? — Do I contend for any-thing more than a mere negative? You *may*, Sir (turning to Mr. Solmes) *possibly* you may, be induced the *rather* to persevere thus ungenerously, as the usage I have met with for your sake, and what you have now seen offered to me by my Brother, will shew you what I *can* bear, were my evil destiny ever to make me yours.

Lord, Madam, cried Solmes (all this time distorted into twenty different attitudes, as my Brother and my Uncle were blessing themselves, and speaking only to each other by their eyes, and by their working features; Lord, Madam) what a construction is This!

A fair construction, Sir, interrupted I: For he that can see a person whom he pretends to value, thus treated, and approve of it, must be capable of treating her thus himself. And that you *do* approve of it, is evident by your declared perseverance, when you know I am confined, banished, and insulted, in order to make me consent to be what I never *can* be. —And this, let me tell you, as I have often told others, not from motives of obstinacy, but aversion.

Excuse me, Sir, turning to my Uncle—To you, as to my Father's Brother, I owe duty. I beg *your* pardon, that I cannot obey you: But as for my *Brother*; he is *but* my Brother; he shall not constrain me: And (turning to the unnatural wretch—I will call him wretch) knit your brows, Sir, and frown

as you will, I will ask you, Would *you*, in my case, make the sacrifices I am willing to make, to obtain every one's favour? If *not*, what right have you to treat me thus? and to procure me to be treated as I have been for so long a time past?

I had put myself by this time into great disorder: They were silent, and seemed by their looks to want to talk to one another, walking about (in violent disorders too) between whiles. I sat down fanning myself (as it happened, against the glass) and I could perceive my colour go and come; and being sick to the very heart, and apprehensive of fainting, I rung.

Betty came in. I called for a glass of water, and drank it: But no-body minded me. I heard my Brother pronounce the words, Art! Female Art! to Solmes; which, together with the apprehension that he would not be welcome, I suppose kept *him* back. Else I could see the man was affected. And (still fearing I should faint) I arose, and taking hold of Betty's arm, Let me hold by you, Betty, said I; Let me withdraw. And moved with trembling feet towards the door, and then turned about, and made a courtesy to my Uncle—Permit me, Sir, said I, to withdraw.

Whither go you, Niece? said my Uncle: We have not done with you yet. I charge you depart not. Mr. Solmes has something to open to you, that will astonish you—And you *shall* hear it.

Only, Sir, by your leave, for a few minutes into the air. I will return, if you command it. I will hear all that I am to hear; that it may be over *Now* and *for Ever*—You will go with me, Betty?

And so, without any farther prohibition, I retired into the garden; and there, casting myself upon the first seat, and throwing Betty's apron over my face, leaning against her side, my hands between hers, I
gave

gave way to a violent burst of grief, or passion, or both; which, as it seemed, saved my heart from breaking; for I was sensible of an immediate relief.

I have already given you specimens of *Mrs. Betty's* impertinence. I shall not, therefore, trouble you with more: For the wench, notwithstanding this my distress, took great liberties with me, after she saw me a little recovered, and as I walked farther into the garden; insomuch that I was obliged to silence her by an absolute prohibition of saying another word to me; and then she dropped behind me sullen and gloomy.

It was near an hour before I was sent for in again. The messenger was my Cousin Dolly Hervey, who, with an eye of compassion and respect (for Miss Hervey always loved me, and calls herself my scholar, as you know) told me, my company was desired.

Betty left us.

Who commands my attendance, Miss? said I—Have you not been in tears, my dear?

Who can forbear tears? said she.

Why, what is the matter, Cousin Dolly?—Sure, nobody is intitled to weep in this family, but *me*!

Yes, I am, Madam, said she, because I love you.

I kissed her; And is it for me, my sweet Cousin, that you shed tears?—There never was Love lost between us: But tell me, what is designed to be done with me, that I have this kind instance of your compassion for me?

You must take no notice of what I tell you, said the dear girl: But my Mamma has been weeping for you, too, with me; but durst not let any-body see it: O my Dolly, said my Mamma, there never was so set a malice in man as in your Cousin James Harlowe. They will ruin the flower and ornament of their family.

As

As how, Miss Dolly?—Did she not explain herself?—As how, my dear?

Yes; she said, Mr. Solmes would have given up his claim to you; for he said, you hated him, and there were no hopes; and your Mamma was willing he should; and to have you taken at your word, to renounce Mr. Lovelace, and to live Single: My Mamma was for it too; for they heard all that passed between you and Uncle Antony, and Cousin James; saying, it was impossible to think of prevailing upon you to have Mr. Solmes. Uncle Harlowe seemed in the same way of thinking; at least, my Mamma says he did not say any-thing to the contrary. But your Papa was immoveable, and was angry at your Mamma and mine upon it: And hereupon your Brother, your Sister, and my Uncle Antony, joined in, and changed the scene intirely. In short, she says, that Mr. Solmes had great matters engaged to him. He owned, that you were the finest young Lady in England, and he would be content to be but little beloved, if he could *not*, after Marriage, engage your Heart, for the sake of having the honour to call you his but for one twelve-month—I suppose he would break your heart in the next—For he is a cruel-hearted man, I am sure.

My friends may break my heart, Cousin Dolly; but Mr. Solmes will never have it in his power to break it.

I do not know That, Miss: You will have good luck to avoid having him, by what I can find; for my Mamma says, they are all now of one mind, herself excepted; and she is forced to be silent, your Papa and Brother are both so outrageous.

I am got above minding my Brother, Cousin Dolly: He is but my Brother. But to my Father I owe duty and obedience, if I could comply.

We are apt to be fond of any-body that will side with

with us, when oppressed, or provoked. I always loved my Cousin Dolly ; but now she endeared herself to me ten times more, by her soothing concern for me. I asked what *she* would do, were she in my case ?

Without hesitation she replied, Have Mr. Lovelace out-of-hand, and take up her own Estate, if she were me ; and there would be an end of it—And Mr. Lovelace, she said, was a fine gentleman ; —Mr. Solmes was not worthy to *buckle his shoes*.

Miss Hervey told me further, that her Mother was desired to come to me, to fetch me in ; but she excused herself. I should have all my friends, she said, she believed, sit in judgment upon me.

I wish it had been so. But, as I have been told since, neither my Father nor my Mother would trust themselves with seeing me : The one it seems for passion sake ; my Mother, for tender considerations.

By this time we entered the house. Miss accompanied me into the parlour, and left me, as a person devoted, I then thought.

No-body was there. I sat down, and had leisure to weep ; reflecting upon what my Cousin Dolly had told me.

They were all in my Sister's parlour adjoining : For I heard a confused mixture of voices, some louder than others, which drowned the more compassionating accents.

Female accents I could distinguish the drowned ones to be. O my dear ! what a hard-hearted Sex is the other ! Children of the same parents, how came they by their cruelty ?—Do they get it by travel ? Do they get it by conversation with one another ?—Or how do they get it ?—Yet my Sister, too, is as hard-hearted as any of them. But this may be no exception neither : For she has been

thought to be masculine in her air, and in her spirit. She has then perhaps, a soul of the *other* Sex in a body of *ours*.—And so, for the honour of *our own*, will I judge of every woman for the future, who, imitating the rougher manners of men, acts unbecoming the gentleness of her own Sex.

Forgive me, my dear friend, for breaking into my Story by these reflections. Were I rapidly to pursue my narration, without thinking, without reflecting, I believe I should hardly be able to keep in my right mind : Since vehemence and passion would then be always uppermost ; but while I *think* as I write, I cool, and my hurry of spirits is allayed.

I believe I was above a quarter of an hour enjoying my own comfortless contemplations, before anybody came in to me ; for they seemed to be in full debate. My Aunt looked in first ; O my dear, said she, are you there ? and withdrew hastily to apprise them of it.

And then (as agreed upon I suppose) in came my Uncle Antony, crediting Mr. Solmes with the words, *Let me lead you in, my dear friend*, having hold of his hand ; while the new-made Beau awkwardly followed, but more edgingly, as I may say, setting his feet mincingly, to avoid treading upon his leader's heels. Excuse me, my dear, this seeming levity ; but those we do not love, appear in every-thing ungraceful to us.

I stood up. My Uncle looked very furly.—Sit down !—sit down, girl, said he—And drawing a chair near me, he placed his *dear friend* in it, whether he would or not, I having taken my seat. And my Uncle sat on the other side of me.

Well, Niece, taking my hand, we shall have very little more to say to you than we have already said, as to the subject that is so distasteful to you—Unless, indeed, you have better considered of the matter—And first, let me know if you have ?

CLARISSA HARLOWE. 115

The matter wants no consideration, Sir.

Very well, very well, *Madam!* said my Uncle, withdrawing his hands from mine: Could I ever have thought of this from you?

For God's sake, dearest Madam, said Mr. Solmes, folding his hands—And there he stopped.

For God's sake, *what*, Sir?—How came God's sake, and your sake, I pray you, to be the same?

This silenced *him*. My Uncle could *only* be angry; and that he was before.

Well, well, well, Mr. Solmes, said my Uncle, no more of supplication. You have not *confidence* enough to expect a woman's favour.

He then was pleased to hint what great things he had designed to do for me; and that it was more for *my* sake, after he returned from the Indies, than for the sake of any *other* of the family, that he had resolved to live a Single Life.—But now, concluded he, that the perverse girl despises all the great things it was once as much in my will, as it is in my power, to do for her, I will change my measures.

I told him, that I most sincerely thanked him for all his kind intentions to me: But that I was willing to resign all claim to any *other* of his favours than kind looks, and kind words.

He looked about him this way and that.

Mr. Solmes looked pitifully down.

But both being silent, I was sorry, I added, that I had too much reason to say a very harsh thing, as it might be thought; which was, That if he would but be pleased to convince my Brother and Sister, that he was absolutely determined to alter his generous purposes towards me, it might possibly procure me better treatment from both, than I was otherwise likely to have.

My Uncle was very much displeased. But he had

not the opportunity to express his displeasure, as he seemed preparing to do; for in came my Brother in exceeding great wrath; and called me several vile names. His success hitherto, in his devices against me, had set him above keeping even decent measures.

Was This my spiteful construction? he asked—Was This the interpretation I put upon his brotherly care of me, and concern for me, in order to prevent my ruining myself?

It *is*, indeed it *is*, said I: I know no other way to account for your late behaviour to me: And before your face, I repeat my request to my Uncle, and I will make it to my other Uncle whenever I am permitted to see him, that they will confer all their favours upon You, and upon my Sister; and only make me happy (It is all I wish for!) in their kind looks, and kind words.

How they all gazed upon one another!—But could I be less peremptory before the man?

And, as to *your* care and concern for me, Sir, turning to my Brother; once more I desire it not. You are but my Brother. My Father and Mother, I bless God, are both living; and, were they *not*, you have given me abundant reason to say, that you are the very last person I would wish to have any concern for me.

How, Niece! And is a Brother, an *only* Brother, of so little consideration with you, as this comes to? And ought he to have no concern for his Sister's honour, and the Family's honour?

My honour, Sir!—I desire none of his concern for That! It never was endangered till it had his undesired concern!—Forgive me, Sir—But when my Brother knows how to act like a Brother, or behave like a Gentleman, he may deserve more consideration from me than it is possible for me now to think he does.

I thought my Brother would have beat me upon this: But my Uncle stood between us.

Violent girl, however he called me—Who, said he, would have thought it of her?

Then was Mr. Solmes told, that I was unworthy of his pursuit.

But Mr. Solmes warmly took my part: He could not bear, he said, that I should be treated so roughly.

And so very much did he exert himself on this occasion, and so patiently was his warmth received by my Brother, that I began to suspect, that it was a contrivance to make me think myself obliged to him; and that this might perhaps be one end of the pressed-for Interview.

The very suspicion of this low artifice, violent as I was thought to be before, put me still more out of patience; and my Uncle and my Brother again praising his wonderful generosity, and his noble return of good for evil, You are a happy man, Mr. Solmes, said I, that you can so *easily* confer obligations upon a whole family, except upon one ingrateful person of it, whom you seem to intend *most* to oblige; but who being made unhappy by your favour, desires not to owe to *you* any protection from the violence of a Brother.

Then was I a rude, an ingrateful, an unworthy creature.

I own it all—All, all you can call me, or think me, Brother, do I own. I own my unworthiness with regard to This gentleman. I take your word for his abundant merit, which I have neither leisure nor inclination to examine into—It may perhaps be as great as your own—But yet I cannot thank him for his mediation: For who sees not, looking at my Uncle, that this is giving himself a merit with everybody at my expence?

Then turning to my Brother, who seemed surpris'd into silence by my warmth, I must also acknowledge, Sir, the favour of *your* superabundant care for me. But I discharge you of it; at least, while I have the happiness of nearer and dearer relations. You have given me no reason to think better of *your* prudence, than of my *own*. I am independent of *You*, Sir; tho' I never desire to be so of my Father: And altho' I wish for the good opinion of my Uncles, it is *All* I wish for from them: And This, Sir, I repeat, *to make You and my Sister easy*.

Instantly almost came in Betty, in a great hurry, looking at me as spitefully, as if she were my *Sister*: Sir, said she to my Brother, my master desires to speak with you this moment at the door.

He went to that which led into my Sister's parlour; and this sentence I heard thundered from the mouth of one who had a right to all my reverence: Son James, let the Rebel be this moment carried away to my Brother's—This very moment—She shall not stay one hour more under my roof!

I trembled; I was ready to sink. Yet, not knowing what I did, or said, I flew to the door, and would have opened it: But my Brother pulled it to, and held it close by the key—O my Papa!—my dear Papa, said I, falling upon my knees, at the door—admit your Child to your presence!—Let me but plead my cause at your feet!—O reprobate not thus your distressed Daughter!

My Uncle put his handkerchief to his eyes: Mr. Solmes made a still more grievous face than he had before. But my Brother's marble heart was untouched.

I will not stir from my knees, continued I, without admission.—At this door I beg it!—O let it be the door of mercy! and open it to me, honoured Sir, I beseech you!—But this once, this once! altho'

altho' you were afterwards to shut it against me for ever !

The door was endeavoured to be opened on the inside, which made my Brother let go the key on a sudden ; and I pressing against it (all the time remaining on my knees) fell flat on my face into the other parlour ; however without hurting myself. But every-body was gone, except Betty, who I suppose was the person that endeavoured to open the door. She helped to raise me up ; and when I was on my feet, I looked round that apartment, and seeing nobody there, re-entered the other, leaning upon her ; and then threw myself into the chair which I had sat in before ; and my eyes overflowed, to my great relief : While my Uncle Antony, my Brother, and Mr. Solmes, left me, and went to my other relations.

What passed among them, I know not : But my Brother came in by the time I had tolerably recovered myself, with a settled and haughty gloom upon his brow—Your Father and Mother command you instantly to prepare for your Uncle Antony's. You need not be solicitous about what you shall take with you. You may give Betty your keys—Take them, Betty, if the perverse-one has them about her, and carry them to her Mother. She will take care to send every-thing after you that you shall want—But another-night you will not be permitted to stay in this house.

I don't chuse to give my keys to any-body, except to my Mother, and into her own hands. You see how much I am disordered. It may cost me my life, to be hurried away so suddenly. I beg to be indulged till next Monday at least.

That will not be granted you. So prepare for this very night. And give up your keys. Give them to *me*, Miss. I'll carry them to your Mother.

Excuse me, Brother. Indeed, I won't.
 Indeed you must. Have you any thing you are
 afraid should be seen by your Mother?
 Not, if I be permitted to attend her.
 I'll make a report accordingly.
 He went out.

In came Miss Dolly Hervey : I am sorry, Madam,
 to be the messenger—But your Mamma insists upon
 your sending up all the keys of your cabinet, library,
 and drawers.

Tell my Mother, that I yield them up to her com-
 mands : Tell her, I make no conditions with my
 Mother : But if she find nothing she shall disapprove
 of, I beg that she will permit me to tarry here a few
 days longer.—Try, my Dolly (the dear girl sobbing
 with grief) ; Try, if your gentleness cannot prevail
 for me.

She wept still more, and said, It is sad, very sad,
 to see matters thus carried !

She took the keys, and wrapped her arms about
 me ; and begged me to excuse her for her message ;
 and would have said more ; but Betty's presence
 awed her, as I saw.

Don't pity me, my dear, said I. It will be im-
 puted to you as a fault. You see who is by.

The insolent wench scornfully smiled : One young
 Lady pitying another in things of this nature, looks
 promising in the youngest, I must needs say.

I bid her begone from my presence.

She would most gladly go, she said, were she not
 to stay about me by my Mother's order.

It soon appeared for what she staid ; for I offering
 to go up stairs to my apartment when my Cousin
 went from me with the keys, she told me she was
 commanded (to her very great regret, she must own)
 to desire me not to go up at present.

Such a bold-face, as she, I told her, should not
 hinder me, She

She instantly rang the bell, and in came my Brother, meeting me at the door.

Return, return, Miss—No going up yet.

I went in again, and throwing myself upon the window-seat, wept bitterly.

Shall I give you the particulars of a ridiculously spiteful conversation that passed between my Brother and me, in the time that he (with Betty) was in office to keep me in the parlour while my closet was searching?—But I think I will not. It can answer no good end.

I desired several times, while he stayed, to have leave to retire to my apartment; but was denied. The search, I suppose, was not over.

Bella was one of those employed in it. They could not have a more diligent searcher. How happy it was they were disappointed!

But when my Sister could not find the *cunning creature's* papers, I was to stand another visit from Mr. Solmes—preceded now by my Aunt Hervey, sorely against her will, I could see that; accompanied by my Uncle Antony, in order to keep her steady, I suppose.

But being a little heavy (for it is now past Two in the morning) I will lie down in my cloaths, to indulge the kind summons, if it will be indulged.

Three o'Clock, Wednesday Morning.

I COULD not sleep—Only dozed away one half-hour.

My Aunt Hervey accosted me thus—O my dear child, what troubles do you give to your parents, and to every-body!—I wonder at you!

I am sorry for it, Madam.

Sorry for it, child!—*Why* then so very obstinate!—Come, sit down, my dear. I will sit next you; taking my hand.

My

My Uncle placed Mr. Solmes on the other side of me : Himself over-against me, almost close to me. Was I not finely beset, my dear ?

Your Brother, child, said my Aunt, is too passionate—His zeal for *your* welfare pushes him on a little too vehemently.

Very true, said my Uncle : But no more of This. We would now be glad to see if milder means will do with you—Tho', indeed, they were tried before.

I asked my Aunt, If it were necessary, that That gentleman should be present ?

There is a reason that he should, said my Aunt, as you will hear by-and-by. But I must tell you, first, that, thinking you was a little too angrily treated by your Brother, your Mother desired me to try what gentler means would do upon a spirit so generous as we used to think yours.

Nothing can be done, Madam, I must presume to say, if This gentleman's address be the end.

She looked upon my Uncle, who bit his lip, and looked upon Mr. Solmes, who rubbed his cheek ; and shaking her head, Good, dear creature, said she, be calm. Let me ask you, If something would have been done, had you been more gently used, than you seem to think you have been ?

No, Madam, I cannot say it would, in this gentleman's favour. You know, Madam, you know, Sir, to my Uncle, I ever valued myself upon my sincerity : And once indeed had the happiness to be valued for it.

My Uncle took Mr. Solmes aside. I heard him say, whisperingly, She must, she shall, still be yours.—We'll see, who'll conquer, Parents, or Child, Uncles, or Niece. I doubt not to be witness to all this being got over, and many a good-humoured jest made of this high phrensy !

I was heartily vexed.

Tho'

Tho' we cannot find out, continued he, yet we *guess*, who puts her upon this obstinate behaviour. It is not natural to her, man. Nor would I concern myself so much about her, but that I know what I say to be true, and intend to do great things for her.

I will hourly pray for that happy time, whispered as audibly Mr. Solmes. I never will revive the remembrance of what is now so painful to me.

Well, but, Niece, I am to tell you, said my Aunt, that the sending up your keys, without making any conditions, has wrought for you what nothing else could have done. That, and the not finding anything that could give them umbrage, together with Mr. Solmes's interposition—

O Madam, let me not owe an obligation to Mr. Solmes. I cannot repay it, except by my *thanks*; and *those* only on condition that he will decline his suit. To my thanks, Sir (turning to him) if you have a heart capable of humanity, if you have any esteem for me for my *own* sake, I beseech you to intitle yourself!—I beseech you, do!—

O Madam, cried he, believe, believe, believe me, it is impossible. While you are single, I *will* hope. While that hope is encouraged by so many worthy friends, I *must* persevere. I must not slight *them*, Madam, because you slight *me*.

I answered him only with a look; but it was of high disdain; and turning from him—But what favour, dear Madam (to my Aunt) has the instance of duty you mention procured me?

Your Mother and Mr. Solmes, replied my Aunt, have prevailed, that your request to stay here till Monday next shall be granted, if you will promise to go chearfully then.

Let me but chuse my own visitors, and I will go to my Uncle's house with pleasure.

Well, Niece, said my Aunt, we must wave this subject,

subject, I find. We will now proceed to another, which will require your utmost attention. It will give you the reason why Mr. Solmes's presence is requisite—

Ay, said my Uncle, and shew you what sort of a man somebody is. Mr. Solmes, pray favour us, in the first place, with the Letter you received from your anonymous friend.

I will, Sir. And out he pulled a Letter-case, and, taking out a Letter, It is written in answer to one sent to the person. It is superscribed, *To Roger Solmes, Esq;* It begins thus: *Honoured Sir—*

I beg your pardon, Sir, said I: But what, pray, is the intent of reading this Letter to me?

To let you know what a vile man you are thought to have set your heart upon, said my Uncle, in an audible whisper.

If, Sir, it be suspected, that I have set my heart upon any other, why is Mr. Solmes to give himself any farther trouble about me?

Only hear, Niece, said my Aunt; Only hear what Mr. Solmes has to read and to say to you on this head.

If, Madam, Mr. Solmes will be pleased to declare, that he has no view to serve, no end to promote, for himself, I will hear any-thing he shall read. But if the contrary, you must allow me to say, That it will abate with me a great deal of the weight of whatever he shall produce.

Hear it but read, Niece, said my Aunt.—

Hear it read, said my Uncle. You are so ready to take part with—

With any-body, Sir, that is accused anonymously, and from interested motives.

He began to read; and there seemed to be a heavy load of charges in this Letter against the poor criminal: But I stopped the reading of it, and said, It will

will not be *my* fault, if this vilified man be not as indifferent to me, as one whom I never saw. If he be otherwise at present, which I neither own, nor deny, it proceeds from the strange methods taken to prevent it. Do not let one cause unite him and me, and we shall not be united. If my offer to live Single be accepted, he shall be no more to me than *this gentleman*.

Still—Proceed, Mr. Solmes—Hear it out, Niece, was my Uncle's cry.

But to what purpose, Sir? said I—Has not Mr. Solmes a *view* in this? And, besides, can any-thing worse be said of Mr. Lovelace, than I have heard said for several months past?

But this, said my Uncle, and what Mr. Solmes can tell you besides, amounts to the *fullest proof*—

Was the unhappy man, then, so freely treated in his character before, *without* full proof? I beseech you, Sir, give me not *too good* an opinion of Mr. Lovelace; as I *may* have, if such pains be taken to make him guilty, by one who means not his reformation by it; nor to do good, if I may presume to say so in this case, to any-body but himself.

I see very plainly, girl, said my Uncle, your prepossession, your fond prepossession, for the person of a man without morals.

Indeed, my dear, said my Aunt, you too much justify all our apprehensions. Surprizing! that a young creature of virtue and honour should thus esteem a man of a quite opposite character!

Dear Madam, do not conclude against me too hastily. I believe Mr. Lovelace is far from being so good as he ought to be: But if every man's private life were searched into by *prejudiced people*, set on for that purpose, I know not whose reputation would be safe. I love a virtuous character, as much in man, as in woman. I think it as requisite, and as
merito-

meritorious, in the one as in the other. And, if left to myself, I would prefer a person of such a character to Royalty without it.

Why then, said my Uncle—

Give me leave, Sir—But I may venture to say, that many of those who have escaped censure, have not merited applause.

Permit me to observe further, That Mr. Solmes himself may not be absolutely faultless. I never heard of his virtues. Some vices I have heard of—Excuse me, Mr. Solmes, I speak to your face—The text about *casting the first stone* affords an excellent lesson.

He looked down; but was silent.

Mr. Lovelace may have vices you have not. You may have others, which *he* has not.—I speak not this to defend him, or to accuse you. No man is bad, no one is good, in *every-thing*. Mr. Lovelace, for example, is said to be implacable, and to hate my friends: That does not make me value him the more: But give me leave to say, That *they* hate him as much. Mr. Solmes has his antipathies, likewise; very *strong* ones, and those to his *own relations*; which I don't find to be the other's fault; for he lives well with *his*—Yet he may have as bad:—Worse, pardon me, he cannot have, in my poor opinion: For what must be the man, who *hates his own flesh*?

You know not, Madam; }

You know not, Niece; }

You know not, Clary; }

All in one breath.

I may not, nor do I desire to know Mr. Solmes's reasons. It *concerns* not me to know them: But the world, even the impartial part of it, accuses him. If the world is unjust, or rash, in *one man's* case, why may it not be so in *another's*? That's all I mean by it. Nor can there be a greater sign of want of merit,

than

than where a man seeks to pull down another's character, in order to build up his own.

The poor man's face was all this time overspread with confusion, twisted, as it were, and all awry, neither mouth nor nose standing in the middle of it. He looked as if he were ready to cry: And had he been capable of pitying me, I had certainly tried to pity him.

They all three gazed upon one another in silence. My Aunt, I saw (at least I thought so) looked as if she would have been glad she might have appeared to approve of what I said. She but feebly blamed me, when she spoke, for not hearing what Mr. Solmes had to say. He himself seemed not now very earnest to be heard. My Uncle said, There was no talking to me. And I should have absolutely silenced both gentlemen, had not my Brother come in again to their assistance.

This was the strange speech he made at his entrance, his eyes flaming with anger; This prating girl has struck you all dumb, I perceive. Persevere, however, Mr. Solmes. I have heard every word she has said: And I know no other method of being even with her, than, after she is yours, to make her as sensible of your power, as she now makes you of her insolence.

Fie, Cousin Harlowe! said my Aunt—Could I have thought a *Brother* would have said this to a gentleman, of a *Sister*?

I must tell you, Madam, said he, that *you* give the rebel courage. You yourself seem to favour too much the arrogance of her Sex in her; otherwise she durst not have thus stopped her Uncle's mouth by reflections upon him; as well as denied to hear a gentleman tell her the danger she is in from a *Liber-tine*, whose protection, as she has plainly hinted, she intends to claim against her family.

Stopped

Stopped my Uncle's mouth, by reflections upon him.
Sir! said I, How can that be! How dare you to make such an application as This!

My Aunt wept at his reflection upon her.—Cousin, said she to him, If *This* be the thanks I have for my trouble, I have done: Your Father would not treat me thus—And I *will* say, that the hint you gave was an unbrotherly one.

Not more unbrotherly than all the rest of his conduct to me, of late, Madam, said I. I see by this specimen of his violence, how every-body has been brought into his measures. Had I any the least apprehension of ever being in Mr. Solmes's power, this *might* have affected me. But you see, Sir, to Mr. Solmes, what a conduct is thought necessary to enable you to arrive at your ungenerous end. You see how my Brother *courts* for you!

I disclaim Mr. Harlowe's violence, Madam, with all my soul. I will never remind you—

Silence, worthy Sir! said I; I will take care you never shall have the opportunity.

Less violence, Clary, said my Uncle. Cousin James, you are as much to blame as your Sister.

In then came my Sister. Brother, said she, you kept not your promise, You are *thought* to be to blame within, as well as here. Were not Mr. Solmes's generosity and affection to the girl *well* known, what you have said would be inexcusable. My Father desires to speak with you; and with you, Aunt; and with you, Uncle; and with you, Mr. Solmes, if you please.

They all four withdrew into the next apartment.

I stood silent, as not knowing presently how to take this intervention of my Sister's. But she left me not long at a loss—O thou perverse thing, said she (poking out her angry face at me, when they were all gone, but speaking spitefully low)—What troubles do you give to us all!

You

You and my Brother, Bella, said I, give trouble to yourselves ; yet neither you nor he have any business to concern yourselves about me.

She threw out some spiteful expressions, still in a low voice, as if she chose not to be heard without ; and I thought it best to oblige her to raise her tone a little, if I could. If I *could*, did I say ? It is easy to make a passionate spirit answer all one's views upon it.

She accordingly flamed out in a raised tone : And this brought my Cousin Dolly in to us. Miss Harlowe, your company is desired.

I will come presently, Cousin Dolly.

But again provoking a severity from me which she could not bear, and calling me names ; in once more came Dolly, with another message, that her company was desired.

Not mine, I doubt, Miss Dolly, said I.

The sweet-tempered girl burst out into tears, and shook her head.

Go in before me, child, said Bella (vexed to see her concern for me) with thy sharp face like a new moon : What dost thou cry for ? Is it to make thy keen face look still keener ?

I believe Bella was blamed, too, when she went in ; for I heard her say, The *creature* was so provoking, there was no keeping a resolution.

Mr. Solmes, after a little while, came in again by himself, to take leave of me : Full of scrapes and compliments ; but too well tutored and encouraged, to give me hope of his declining his suit. He begged me not to impute to him any of the severe things to which he had been a sorrowful witness. He besought my compassion, as he called it.

He said, the result was, That he had still hopes given him ; and, altho' discouraged by me, he was resolved to persevere, while I remained single.—And

such long and such painful services he talked of, as never before were heard of.

I told him, in the strongest manner, what he had to trust to.

Yet still he determined to persist.— While I was no man's else, he must hope.

What! said I, will you still persist, when I declare, as I now do, that my affections are engaged?—And let my Brother make the most of it.

He knew my principles, and adored me for them. He doubted not, that it was in his power to make me happy: And he was sure I would not want the will to be so.

I assured him, that, were I to be carried to my Uncle's, it should answer no end; for I would never see him; nor receive a line from him; nor hear a word in his favour, whoever were the person who should mention him to me.

He was sorry for it. He must be miserable, were I to hold in that mind. But he doubted not, that I might be induced by my Father and Uncles to change it—

Never, never, he might depend upon it.

It was richly worth his patience, and the trial.

At my *expence*?— At the price of all my *happiness*, Sir?

He hoped I should be induced to think otherwise.

And then would he have run into his fortune, his settlements, his affection— Vowing, that never man loved a woman with so sincere a passion, as he loved me.

I stopped him, as to the first part of his speech: And to the second, of the sincerity of his passion, What then, Sir, said I, is your Love to one, who must assure you, that never young creature looked upon man with a more sincere disapprobation, than I look upon you? And tell me, What argument can you

you urge, that this *true* declaration answers not beforehand?

Dearest Madam, what can I say?—On my knees I beg—

And down the ungraceful wretch dropped on his knees.

Let me not kneel in vain, Madam: Let me not be thus despised.—And he looked most odiously sorrowful.

I have kneeled too, Mr. Solmes: Often have I kneeled: And I will kneel again—Even to *you*, Sir, will I kneel, if there be so much merit in kneeling; provided you will not be the implement of my cruel Brother's undeserved persecution.

If all the services, even to worship you, during my whole life—You, Madam, invoke and expect mercy; yet shew none—

Am I to be cruel to myself, to shew mercy to you? Take my Estate, Sir, with all my heart, since you are such a favourite in this house!—Only leave me *myself*—The mercy you ask for, do *you* shew to others.

If you mean to my relations, Madam—unworthy as they are, all shall be done that you shall prescribe.

Who, I, Sir, to find you bowels you naturally have not? I to purchase *their* happiness by the forfeiture of *my own*? What I ask you for, is mercy to myself: That, since you seem to have some power over my relations, you will use it in my behalf. Tell them, that you see I cannot conquer my aversion to you: Tell them, if you are a wise man, that you value too much your own happiness, to risque it against such a determined antipathy: Tell them, that I am unworthy of your offers: And that, in mercy to yourself, as well as to me, you will not prosecute a suit so impossible to be granted.

I will risque all consequences, said the fell wretch,

rising, with a countenance whitened over, as if with malice, his hollow eyes flashing fire, and biting his under-lip, to shew he could be *manly*. Your hatred, Madam, shall be no objection with me: And I doubt not in a few days to have it in my power to shew you—

You have it in your power, Sir—
He came well off— *To shew you* more generosity, than, noble as you are said to be to others, you shew to me.

The man's face became his anger: It seems formed to express the passion.

At that instant, again came in my Brother—Sister, Sister, Sister, said he, with his teeth set, act on the termagant part you have so newly assumed—Most wonderfully well does it become you. It is but a short one, however. Tyranness in your turn, accuse others of your own guilt— But leave her, leave her, Mr. Solmes; her time is short. You'll find her humble and mortified enough very quickly— Then, how like a little tame fool will she look, with her conscience upbraiding her, and begging of you [with a whining voice, the barbarous Brother spoke] to forgive and forget!—

More he said, as he flew out, with a glowing face, upon Shorey's coming in to recal him on his violence.

I removed from chair to chair, excessively frightened and disturbed at this brutal treatment.

The man attempted to excuse himself, as being sorry for my Brother's passion.

Leave me, leave me, Sir, fanning—or I shall faint. And indeed I thought I should.

He recommended himself to my favour with an air of assurance; augmented, as I thought, by a distress so visible in me; for he even snatched my trembling, my struggling hand; and ravished it to his odious mouth.

I flung

I flung from him with high disdain: And he withdrew, bowing and cringing; self-gratified, and enjoying, as I thought, the confusion he saw me in.

The wretch is now, methinks, before me; and now I see him awkwardly striding backward, as he retired, till the edge of the opened door, which he ran against, remembered him to turn his welcome back upon me.

Upon his withdrawing, Betty brought me word, that I was permitted to go up to my own chamber: And was bid to consider of every-thing: For my time was short. Nevertheless, she believed I might be permitted to stay till Saturday.

She tells me, That altho' my Brother and Sister were blamed for being so *hasty* with me, yet when they made *their* report, and my Uncle Antony *his*, of my provocations, they were all more determined than ever in Mr. Solmes's favour.

The wretch himself, she tells me, pretends to be more in love with me than before; and to be rather delighted than discouraged with the conversation that passed between us. He ran on, she says, in raptures, about the grace wherewith I should dignify his board; and the like sort of stuff, either of *his* saying, or of *her* making.

She closed all with a Now is your time, Miss, to submit with a grace, and to make your own terms with him:—Else, I can tell you, were I Mr. Solmes, it should be worse for you: And who, Miss, of *our* Sex, proceeded the saucy creature, would admire a rakish gentleman, when she might be admired by a sober one to the end of the chapter?

She made this further speech to me on quitting my chamber— You have had *amazing* good luck, Miss, I must tell you, to keep your writings concealed so cunningly. You must needs think I know that you are always at your pen: And as you endeavour

to hide that knowlege from me, I do not think myself obliged to keep your secret. But I love not to aggravate. I had rather reconcile by much. Peacemaking is my talent, and ever was. And had I been as much your foe, as you imagine, you had not perhaps been here now. But this, however, I do not say to make a merit with you, Miss: For, truly, it will be the better for you the sooner every-thing is over with you. And better for me, and for every-one else; that's certain. Yet one hint I must conclude with; that your pen and ink (soon as you are to go away) will not be long in your power, I do assure you, Miss. And then, having lost *that* amusement, it will be seen, how a mind so active as yours will be able to employ itself.

This hint alarms me so much, that I shall instantly begin to conceal, in different places, pens, ink, and paper; and to deposit some in the Ivy Summer-house, if I can find a safe place there; and, at the worst, I have got a pencil of black, and another of red lead, which I use in my drawings; and my patterns shall serve for paper, if I have no other.

How lucky it was, that I had got away my papers! They made a strict search for them; That I can see, by the disorderly manner they have left all things in: For you know that I am such an observer of method, that I can go to a bit of ribband, or lace, or edging, blindfold. The same in my books; which they have strangely disordered and mismatched; to look *behind* them, and *in* some of them, I suppose. My cloaths too are rumpled not a little. No place has escaped them. To your hint, I thank you, are they indebted for their disappointment.

The pen, thro' heaviness and fatigue, dropt out of my fingers, at the word *indebted*. I resumed it, to finish the sentence; and to tell you, that I am,

Your for ever obliged and affectionate

CL. HARLOWE.

LETTER XIX.

*Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, To Miss HOWE.**Wednesday, Eleven o'Clock, April 5.*

I Must write as I have opportunity; making use of my concealed Stores: For my pens and ink (all of each that they could find) are taken from me; as I shall tell you more particularly by-and-by.

About an hour ago, I deposited my long Letter to you; as also, in the usual place, a billet to Mr. Lovelace, lest his impatience should put him upon some rashness; signifying, in four lines, 'That the Interview was over; and that I hoped my steady refusal of Mr. Solmes would discourage any further applications to me in his favour.'

Altho' I was unable (through the fatigue I had undergone, and by reason of sitting up all night, to write to you; which made me lie longer than ordinary this morning) to deposit my Letter to you sooner; yet I hope you will have it in such good time, as that you will be able to send me an Answer to it this night, or in the morning early; which, if ever so short, will inform me, whether I may depend upon your Mother's indulgence, or not. This it behoves me to know as soon as possible; for they are resolved to hurry me away on Saturday next at farthest; perhaps to-morrow.

I will now inform you of all that happened previous to their taking away my pen and ink, as well as of the manner in which that act of violence was committed; and this as briefly as I can.

My Aunt, who (as well as Mr. Solmes, and my two Uncles) lives here, I think, came up to me, and said, She would fain have me hear what Mr. Solmes had to say of Mr. Lovelace—Only that I might be apprised of some things, that would convince me

what a vile man he is, and what a wretched Husband he must make. I might give them what degree of credit I pleased ; and take them with abatement for Mr. Solmes's interestedness, if I thought fit. But it might be of use to me, were it but to question Mr. Lovelace indirectly upon some of them, that related to *myself*.

I was indifferent, I said, about what he could say of me ; as I was sure it could not be to my disadvantage ; and as *he* had no reason to impute to me the forwardness which my unkind friends had so causelessly taxed me with.

She said, That he gave himself high airs on account of his family ; and spoke as despicably of ours as if an alliance with *us* were beneath him.

I replied, That he was a very unworthy man, if it were true, to speak slightly of a family, which was as good as his own, bating that it was not allied to the Peerage : That the dignity itself, I thought, conveyed more shame than honour to descendents, who had not merit to adorn, as well as to be adorned by it : That my Brother's absurd pride, indeed, which made him every-where declare, he would never marry but to *Quality*, gave a disgraceful preference against ours : But that were I to be assured, that Mr. Lovelace was capable of so mean a pride as to insult us or value himself on such an accidental advantage, I should think as despicably of his sense, as every-body else did of his morals.

She insisted upon it, that he *had* taken such liberties ; and offered to give some instances, which, she said, would surprise me.

I answered, That were it ever so certain that Mr. Lovelace had taken such liberties, it would be but common justice (so much hated as he was by all our family, and so much inveighed against in all companies by them) to inquire into the provocation he had

to say what was imputed to him; and whether the value some of my friends put upon the riches they possess (throwing perhaps contempt upon every other advantage, and even discrediting *their own* pretensions to family, in order to depreciate *his*) might not provoke him to like contempts. Upon the whole, Madam, said I, can you say, that the inveteracy lies not as much on *our* side, as on *his*? Can *he* say any-thing of *us* more disrespectful than *we* say of *him*?—And as to the suggestion, so often repeated, that he will make a bad Husband, is it possible for him to use a Wife worse than I am used; particularly by my Brother and Sister?

Ah, Niece! ah, my dear! how firmly has this wicked man attached you!

Perhaps not, Madam. But really great care should be taken by Fathers and Mothers, when they would have their Daughters of *their* minds in these particulars, not to say things that shall necessitate the child, in honour and generosity, to take part with the man her friends are averse to. But, waving all this, as I have offered to renounce him for ever, I see not why he should be mentioned to me, nor why I should be wished to hear any-thing about him.

Well, but still, my dear, there can be no harm to let Mr. Solmes tell you what Mr. Lovelace has said of *you*. Severely as you have treated Mr. Solmes, he is fond of attending you once more: He begs to be heard on this head.

If it be proper for me to hear it, Madam—

It *is*, eagerly interrupted she, very proper.

Has what he has said of *me*, Madam, convinced *you* of Mr. Lovelace's baseness?

It has, my dear: And that you ought to abhor him for it.

Then, dear Madam, be pleased to let me hear it from *your* mouth: There is no need that I should see
Mr.

Mr. *Solmes*, when it will have double the weight from *you*. What, Madam, has the man dared to say of *me*?

My Aunt was quite at a loss.

At last, Well, said she, I see how you are attached. I am sorry for it, Miss. For I do assure you, it will signify nothing. You must be Mrs. *Solmes*; and that in a very few days.

If consent of heart, and assent of voice, be necessary to a Marriage, I am sure I never can, nor ever will be married to Mr. *Solmes*. And what will any of my relations be answerable for, if they force my hand into his, and hold it there till the Service be read; I perhaps insensible, and in fits, all the time!

What a romantic picture of a forced Marriage have you drawn, Niece! Some people would say, you have given a fine description of your own obstinacy, child.

My Brother and Sister would: But you, Madam, distinguish, I am sure, between obstinacy and aversion.

Supposed aversion may owe its rise to *real* obstinacy, my dear.

I know my own heart, Madam. I wish *you* did!

Well, but see Mr. *Solmes* once more, Niece. It will oblige, and make for you, more than you imagine.

What should I see him for, Madam?—Is the man fond of hearing me declare my aversion to him?—Is he desirous of having me more and more incense my friends against myself?—O my cunning, my ambitious Brother!

Ah, my dear!—with a look of pity, as if she understood the meaning of my exclamation—But must That necessarily be the case?

It must, Madam, if they will take offence at me for declaring my steadfast detestation of Mr. *Solmes*, as a Husband.

Mr.

Mr. Solmes is to be pitied, said she. He adores you. He longs to see you once more. He loves you the better for your cruel usage of him yesterday. He is in raptures about you.

Ugly creature, thought I!—He in raptures!

What a cruel wretch must He be, said I, who can enjoy the distress to which he so largely contributes!—But I see, I see, Madam, that I am considered as an animal to be baited, to make sport for my Brother and Sister, and Mr. Solmes. They are all, all of them, wanton in their cruelty.—I, Madam, see the man!—the man so incapable of pity!—Indeed I will not see him, if I can help it.—Indeed I will not.

What a construction does your lively wit put upon the admiration Mr. Solmes expresses of you! Passionate as you were yesterday, and contemptuously as you treated him, he dotes upon you for the very severity by which he suffers. He is not so ungenerous a man as you think him. Nor has he an unfeeling heart.—Let me prevail upon you, my dear (as your *Father* and *Mother* expect it of you) to see him once more, and hear what he has to say to you.

How can I consent to see him again, when yesterday's Interview was interpreted by you, Madam, as well as by every other, as an encouragement to him? When I myself declared, that if I saw him a *second* time by my own consent, it might be so taken? And when I am determined never to encourage him?

You might spare your reflections upon me, Miss. I have no thanks either from one side or the other.

And away she flung.

Dearest Madam! said I, following her to the door—

But she would not hear me further; and her sudden breaking from me occasioned a hurry to some mean

mean listener; as the slipping of a foot from the landing-place on the stairs discovered to me.

I had scarcely recovered myself from this attack, when up came Betty—Miss, said she, your company is desired below-stairs in your own parlour.

By whom, Betty?

How can I tell, Miss?—Perhaps by your Sister; perhaps by your Brother—I know they won't come up-stairs to your apartment again.

Is Mr. Solmes gone, Betty?

I believe he is, Miss—Would you have him sent for back? said the bold creature.

Down I went: And to whom should I be sent for, but to my Brother and Mr. Solmes? The latter standing sneaking behind the door, so that I saw him not, till I was mockingly led by the hand into the room by my Brother. And then I started as if I had beheld a ghost.

You are to sit down, Clary.

And what then, Brother?

Why then, you are to put off that scornful look, and hear what Mr. Solmes has to say to you.

Sent for down to be baited again, thought I?

Madam, said Mr. Solmes, as if in haste to speak, lest he should not have opportunity given him [and indeed he judged right] Mr. Lovelace is a declared *Marriage-bater*, and has a design upon your honour, if ever—

Base accuser! said I, in a passion, snatching my hand from my Brother, who was insolently motioning to give it to Mr. Solmes; he has not!—he dares not!—But *you* have, if endeavouring to force a free mind be to dishonour it!

O thou violent creature! said my Brother—But not gone yet—for I was rushing away.

What mean you, Sir (struggling vehemently to get away) to detain me thus against my will?

You

You shall not go, Violence ; clasping his unbrotherly arms about me.

Then let not Mr. Solmes stay.—Why hold you me thus ? He shall not, for *your own* sake, if I can help it, see how barbarously a Brother can treat a Sister who deserves not evil treatment.

And I struggled so vehemently to get from him, that he was forced to quit my hand ; which he did with these words — Begone then, Fury ! — How strong is will ! — There is no holding her.

And up I flew to my chamber, and locked myself in, trembling, and out of breath.

In less than a quarter of an hour, up came Betty. I let her in upon her tapping, and asking (half out of breath too) for admittance.

The Lord have mercy upon us ! said she.—What a *confusion of a house* is This ! [hurrying up and down, fanning herself with her handkerchief] Such angry Masters and Mistresses ! — Such an obstinate young Lady ! — Such an humble Lover ! — Such enraged Uncles ! — Such — O dear ! — dear ! What a topsy-turvy house is This ! — And all for what, trow ? — Only because a young Lady *may* be happy, and will *not* ? — Only because a young Lady *will* have a Husband, and will *not* have a Husband ? What hurly-burries are here, where all used to be peace and quietness !

Thus she ran on to herself ; while I sat as patiently as I could (being assured that her errand was not designed to be a welcome one to me) to observe when her soliloquy would end.

At last, turning to me—I must do as I am bid. I can't help it—Don't be angry with me, Miss. But I must carry down your pen and ink : And that, this moment.

By whose order ?

By your Papa's and Mamma's.

How

How shall I know that?

She offered to go to my closet: I stepped in before her: Touch it, if you dare.

Up came my Cousin Dolly—Madam!—Madam! said the poor weeping good-natured creature, in broken sentences—You must—indeed you must—deliver to Betty—or to me—your pen and ink.

Must I, my sweet Cousin? Then I will to you; but not to this bold body. And so I gave my standish to her.

I am sorry, very sorry, said Miss, to be the messenger: But your Papa will not have you in the same house with him: He is resolved you shall be carried away to-morrow, or Saturday at farthest. And therefore your pen and ink is taken away, that you may give no-body notice of it.

And away went the dear girl, very sorrowful, carrying down with her my standish, and all its furniture, and a little parcel of pens beside, which having been seen when the great search was made, she was bid to ask for. As it happened, I had not diminished it, having hid half a dozen crow-quills in as many different places. It was lucky; for I doubt not they had numbered how many were in the parcel.

Betty run on, telling me, that my Mother was now as much incensed against me, as any body.—That my doom was fixed—That my violent behaviour had not left one to plead for me—That Mr. Solmes bit his lip, and muttered, and *seemed to have more in his head, than could come out at his mouth*; that was her phrase.

And yet she also hinted to me, that the cruel wretch took pleasure in seeing me; altho' so much to my disgust.—And so wanted to see me again. Must he not be a savage, my dear?

The wench went on—That my Uncle Harlowe said, That now *he* gave me up.—That he pitied Mr. Solmes

Solmes—Yet hoped he would not think of This to my detriment hereafter: That my Uncle Antony was of opinion, That I ought to smart for it: *And*, for *her* part—And then, as one of the family, she gave her opinion of the same side.

As I have no other way of hearing any-thing that is said or intended below, I bear sometimes more patiently than I otherwise should do with her impertinence. And indeed she seems to be in all my Brother's and Sister's counsels.

Miss Hervey came up again, and demanded an half-pint ink-bottle which they had seen in my closet.

I gave it her without hesitation.

If they have no suspicion of my being able to write, they will perhaps let me stay longer than otherwise they would.

This, my dear, is now my situation.

All my dependence, all my hopes, are in your Mother's favour. But for That, I know not *what* I might do: For who can tell what will come next?

LETTER XX.

Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, To Miss HOWE.

Wednesday, Four o' Clock in the Afternoon.

I Am just returned from depositing the Letter I so lately finished, and such of Mr. Lovelace's Letters as I had not sent you. My long Letter I found remaining there.—So you will have both together.

I am concerned, methinks, it is not with you.—But your servant cannot always be at leisure. However, I will deposit as fast as I write. I must keep nothing by me now; and when I write, lock myself in, that I may not be surprised now they think I have no pen and ink.

I found in the usual place another Letter from this diligent man: And by its contents, a confirmation
that

that nothing passes in this house but he knows it; and that almost as soon as it passes. For this Letter must have been written before he could have received my Billet; and deposited I suppose when that was taken away; yet he compliments me in it upon asserting myself (as he calls it) on that occasion to my Uncle and to Mr. Solmes.

He assures me, however, that they are more and more determined to subdue me.

He sends me the compliments of his family; and acquaints me with their earnest desire to see me amongst them. Most vehemently does he press for my quitting This house, while it is in my power to get away: And again craves leave to order his Uncle's Chariot-and-six to attend my commands at the stile leading to the coppice adjoining to the paddock.

Settlements to my own will he again offers. Lord M. and Lady Sarah and Lady Betty to be guarantees of his honour and justice. But, if I chuse not to go to either of those Ladies, nor yet to make him the happiest of men so soon as it is nevertheless his hope that I will, he urges me to withdraw to my own house; and to accept of my Lord M. for my guardian and protector till my Cousin Morden arrives. He can contrive, he says, to give me easy possession of it, and will fill it with his female Relations on the first invitation from me; and Mrs. Norton, or Miss Howe, may be undoubtedly prevailed upon to be with me for a time. There can be no pretence for litigation, he says, when I am once in it. Nor, if I chuse to have it so, will he appear to visit me; nor presume to mention Marriage to me till all is quiet and easy; till every method I shall prescribe for a Reconciliation with my friends is tried; till my Cousin comes; till such Settlements are drawn as he shall approve of for me;

‘ me ; and that I have unexceptionable proofs of his
 ‘ own good behaviour.’

As to the disgrace a person of my character may
 be apprehensive of upon quitting my Father’s house,
 he observes (too truly I doubt) ‘ That the treatment
 ‘ I meet with is in every one’s mouth : Yet, he says,
 ‘ that the public voice is in my favour : My friends
 ‘ themselves, he says, *expect* that I will do myself,
 ‘ what he calls, this justice : Why else do they confine
 ‘ me ? He urges, that, thus treated, the independ-
 ‘ ence I have a right to will be my sufficient excuse,
 ‘ going but from their house to my own, if I chuse
 ‘ that measure ; or in order to take possession of
 ‘ my own, if I do not : That all the disgrace I *can*
 ‘ receive, they have already given me : That his
 ‘ concern and his family’s concern in my honour,
 ‘ will be equal to my own, if he may be so happy
 ‘ ever to call me his : And he presumes, he says, to
 ‘ aver, that no family can better supply the loss of
 ‘ my own friends to me than his, in whatever way
 ‘ I shall do them the honour to accept of his and
 ‘ their protection.

‘ But he repeats, that, in all events, he will oppose
 ‘ my being carried to my Uncle’s ; being well assured,
 ‘ that I shall be lost to him for ever, if once I enter
 ‘ into that house.’ He tells me, ‘ That my Brother
 ‘ and Sister, and Mr. Solmes, design to be there to
 ‘ receive me : That my Father and Mother will not
 ‘ come near me till the Ceremony is actually over :
 ‘ And that then they will appear, in order to try to
 ‘ reconcile me to my odious Husband by urging upon
 ‘ me the obligations I shall be supposed to be under
 ‘ from a double duty.’

How, my dear, am I driven on one side, and in-
 vited on the other !—This last intimation is but a too
 probable one. All the steps they take seem to tend to
 this ! And, indeed, they have declared almost as much.

He owns, ' That he has already taken his measures upon this intelligence :—But that he is *so* desirous for *my sake* (I must *suppose*, he says, that he owes *them* no forbearance *for their own*) to avoid coming to extremities, that he has suffered a person, whom they do not suspect, to acquaint them with his resolutions, as if come at by accident, if they persist in their design to carry me by violence to my Uncle's; in hopes, that they may be induced from the fear of mischief which may ensue, to *change* their measures : And yet he is aware, that he has exposed himself to the greatest risques by having caused this intimation to be given them ; since, if he cannot benefit himself by their fears, there is no doubt but they will doubly guard themselves against him upon it.'

What a dangerous enterprizer, however, is this man !

' He begs a few lines from me, by way of answer to this Letter, either this evening, or to-morrow morning. If he be not so favoured, he shall conclude, from what he knows of the fixed determination of my Relations, that I shall be under a closer restraint than before : And he shall be obliged to take his measures according to that presumption.'

You will see by this abstract, as well as by his Letter preceding This (for both run in the same strain) how strangely forward the difficulty of my situation has brought him in his declarations and proposals ; and in his threatenings too : Which, but for That, I would not take from him.

Something, however, I must speedily resolve upon, or it will be out of my power to help myself.

Now I think of it, I will inclose his Letter (so might have spared the abstract of it) that you may the better judge of all his proposals, and intelligence ; and lest it should fall into other hands. I cannot forget the

the contents, altho' I am at a loss what answer to return (a).

I cannot bear the thoughts of throwing myself upon the protection of his friends:—But I will not examine his proposals closely, till I hear from you. Indeed, I have no *eligible* hope, but in your Mother's goodness. *Hers* is a protection I could more *reputably* fly to, than to That of any other person: And from hers should be ready to return to my Father's (for the breach then would not be irreparable, as it would be, if I fled to his family): *To return*, I repeat, on such terms as shall secure but my *Negative*; not my *Independence*: I do not aim at That (so shall lay your Mother under the less difficulty); altho' I have a right to be put into possession of my Grandfather's Estate, if I were to insist upon it:—Such a right, I mean, as my Brother exerts in the Estate left *him*; and which no-body disputes.—God forbid, that I should ever think myself freed from my Father's *reasonable* controul, whatever right my Grandfather's Will has given me! He, good gentleman, left me that Estate, as a reward of my duty, and not to set me above it, as has been justly hinted to me: And this reflection makes me more fearful of not answering the intention of so valuable a bequest.—O that my friends knew but my heart!—Would but think of it as they used to do—For once more, I say, If it deceive me not, it is not altered, altho' theirs are!

Would but your Mother permit you to send her chariot, or chaise, to the bye-place where Mr. Lovelace proposes Lord M's shall come (provoked, intimidated, and apprehensive, as I am) I would not hesitate a moment what to do. Place me any-where, as I have said before—In a cott, in a garret; any-

(a) She accordingly incloses Mr. Lovelace's Letter. But as the most material contents of it are given in her Abstract, it is omitted.

where—Disguised as a Servant—or let me pass as a Servant's Sister—So that I may but escape Mr. Solmes on one hand, and the disgrace of refuging with the family of a man at enmity with my own, on the other; and I shall be in some measure happy!—Should your good Mother refuse me, what refuge, or whose, can I fly to?—Dearest creature, advise your distressed friend.

I BROKE off here—I was so excessively uneasy, that I durst not trust myself with my own reflections: I therefore went down to the garden, to try to calm my mind, by shifting the scene. I took but one turn upon the Filbeard-walk, when Betty came to me. Here, Miss, is your Papa!—Here is your Uncle Antony!—Here is my young Master—and my young Mistress, coming, to take a walk in the garden; and your Papa sends me to see where you are, for fear he should meet you.

I struck into an oblique path, and got behind the yew-hedge, seeing my Sister appear; and there concealed myself till they were gone past me.

My Mother, it seems, is not well. My poor Mother keeps her chamber.—Should she be worse, I should have an additional unhappiness, in apprehension that my reputed undutifulness has touched her heart.

You cannot imagine what my emotions were behind the yew-hedge, on seeing my Father so near me. I was glad to look at him thro' the hedge, as he passed by: But I trembled in every joint, when I heard him utter *these* words: Son James, To You, and to Bella, and to You, Brother, do I wholly commit this matter. That I was meant, I cannot doubt. And yet, why was I so affected; since I may be said to have been given up to the cruelty of my Brother and Sister for many days past?

WHILE

WHILE my Father remained in the garden, I sent my dutiful compliments to my Mother, with inquiry after her health, by Shorey, whom I met accidentally upon the stairs; for none of the servants, except my gaolerefs, dare to throw themselves in my way. I had the mortification of such a return, as made me repent my message, tho' not my concern for her health. 'Let her not inquire after the disorders she occasions,' was the harsh answer. 'I will not receive any compliments from her.'

Very, very, hard, my dear! Indeed it is very hard.

I HAVE the pleasure to hear that my Mother is already better. A colicky disorder, to which she is too subject. It is hoped it is gone off.—God send it may!—Every evil that happens in this house is owing to me!

This good news was told me, with a circumstance very unacceptable; for Betty said, she had orders to let me know, that my garden-walks and poultry-visits were suspected; and that both will be prohibited, if I stay here till Saturday or Monday.

Possibly this is said by order, to make me go with less reluctance to my Uncle's.

My Mother bid her say, if I expostulated about these orders, and about my pen and ink, 'That reading was more to the purpose, at present, than writing: That by the one, I might be taught my duty; That the other, considering whom I was believed to write to, only stiffened my will: That my needle-works had better be pursued, than my airings; which were observed to be taken in all weathers.'

So, my dear, if I do not resolve upon something soon, I shall neither be able to avoid the intended evil, nor have it in my power to correspond with you.

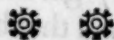
Wednesday Night.

ALL is in a hurry below-stairs. Betty is in and out like a spy. Something is working, I know not what. I am really a good deal disordered in body as well as mind. Indeed I am quite heart-sick.

I will go down, tho' 'tis almost dark, on pretence of getting a little air and composure. Robert has my two former, I hope, before now: And I will deposit This, with Lovelace's inclosed, if I can, for fear of another search.

I know not what I shall do!—All is so strangely busy!—Doors clapt too—Going out of one apartment, hurryingly, as I may say, into another. Betty in her alarming way, staring, as if of frightened importance; twice with me in half an hour; called down in haste by Shorey the last time; leaving me with still *more* meaning in her looks and gestures—Yet possibly nothing in all this worthy of my apprehensions.—

Here again comes the creature, with her deep-drawn affected sighs, and her *O dear's! O dear's!*



MORE dark hints thrown out by this saucy creature. But she will not explain herself. 'Suppose this pretty business ends in murder, she says? I may rue my opposition, as long as I live, for aught she knows. Parents will not be *baffled* out of their children by impudent gentlemen; nor is it fit they should. It may come home to me, when I least expect it.'

These are the gloomy and perplexing hints this impertinent throws out. Probably they arise from the information Mr. Lovelace says he has secretly permitted them to have (from his vile double-faced agent, I suppose!) of his resolution to prevent my being carried to my Uncle's.

How *justly*, if so, may This exasperate them!—

How

How am I driven to and fro, like a feather in the wind, at the pleasure of the rash, the selfish, and the headstrong! and when I am as averse to the proceedings of the one, as I am to those of the other! For altho' I was induced to carry on this unhappy correspondence, as I think I ought to call it, in hopes to prevent mischief; yet indiscreet measures are fallen upon by the rash man, before I, who am so much concerned in the event of the present contentions, can be consulted: And between his violence on one hand, and that of my relations on the other, I find myself in danger from both.

• O my dear! what is worldly wisdom but the
• height of folly?—I, the meanest, at least the young-
• est, of my Father's family, to thrust myself in the
• gap between such uncontrollable spirits!—To the
• interception perhaps of the designs of Providence,
• which may intend to make these hostile spirits their
• own punishers.—If so, what presumption!—Indeed,
• my dear friend, I am afraid I have thought myself
• of too much consequence. But, however this be,
• *it is good, when calamities befall us, that we should*
• *look into ourselves, and fear.*

If I am prevented depositing this and the inclosed (as I intend to try to do, late as it is) I will add to it as occasion shall offer. Mean time, believe me to be

Your ever affectionate and grateful

CL. HARLOWE.

Under the superscription, written with a pensil, after she went down.

‘ My two former are not yet taken away.—I am surprised—I hope you are well—I hope All is right
‘ betwixt your Mother and you.’

LETTER XXI.

Miss HOWE, To Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Thursday Morning (April 9).

I Have your three Letters. Never was there a creature more impatient on the most interesting uncertainty than I was, to know the event of the Interview between you and Solmes.

It behoves me to account to my dear friend, in her present unhappy situation, for every-thing that may have the least appearance of negligence or remissness on my part. I sent Robin in the morning early, in hopes of a deposit. He loitered about the place till near Ten to no purpose; and then came away; my Mother having given him a Letter to carry to Mr. Hunt's, which he was to deliver before Three, when only, in the day-time, that gentleman is at home; and to bring her back an Answer to it. Mr. Hunt's house, you know, lies wide from Harlowe-Place. Robin but just saved his time; and returned not till it was too late to send him again. I could only direct him to set out before day this morning; and, if he got any Letter, to ride as for his life to bring it to me.

I lay by myself: A most uneasy night I had thro' impatience; and being discomposed with it, lay longer than usual. Just as I was risen, in came Kitty, from Robin, with your three Letters. I was not a quarter dressed; and only slipped on my morning Sac; proceeding no further till I had read them all thro', long as they are: And yet I often stopped to rave aloud (tho' by myself) at the devilish people you have to deal with.

How my heart rises at them all! How poorly did they design to trick you into an encouragement of Solmes, from the extorted Interview!—I am very, very angry at your Aunt Hervey—To give up her
own

own judgment so tamely!—And, not content to do so, to become such an *active* instrument in their hands!—But it is so like the world!—So like my Mother too!—Next to her own child, there is not any-body living she values so much as she does you:—Yet, it is—Why should we embroil ourselves, Nancy, with the affairs of other people?

Other people!—How I hate the poor words, where friendship is concerned, and where the protection to be given may be of so much consequence to a friend, and of so little detriment to one's self!

I am delighted with your spirit, however. I expected it not from you. Nor did They, I am sure. Nor would *you*, perhaps, have exerted it, if Lovelace's intelligence of Solmes's Nursery-offices had not set you up. I wonder not that the wretch is said to love you the better for it. What an honour would it be to him to have such a Wife? And he can be even with you when you are so. He must indeed be a savage, as you say.—Yet is he less to blame for his perseverance, than those of your own family whom most you reverence, for theirs.

It is well, as I have often said, that I have not such provocations and trials; I should perhaps long ago have taken your Cousin Dolly's advice—Yet dare I not to touch that key.—I shall always love the good girl for her tenderness to you.

I know not what to say to Lovelace; nor what to think of his promises, nor of his proposals to you. 'Tis certain that you are highly esteemed by all his family. The Ladies are persons of unblemished honour. My Lord M. is also (as Men and Peers go) a man of honour. I could tell what to advise any other person in the world to do but you. So much expected from you!—Such a shining light!—Your quitting your Father's house, and throwing yourself into the protection of a family, however honourable,
that

that has a man in it, whose person, parts, declarations, and pretensions, will be thought to have engaged your warmest esteem;—Methinks I am rather for advising that you should get privately to London; and not to let either him, or any-body else but me, know where you are, till your Cousin Morden comes.

As to going to your Uncle's, that you must not do if you can help it. Nor must you have Solmes, that's certain: Not only because of his unworthiness in every respect, but because of the aversion you have so openly avowed to him; which every-body knows and talks of; as they do of your approbation of the other. For your reputation-sake therefore, as well as to prevent mischief, you must either live single, or have Lovelace.

If you think of going to London, let me know; and I hope you will have *time* to allow me a further concert as to the manner of your getting away, and thither, and how to procure proper lodgings for you.

To obtain this *time*, you must palliate a little, and come into some seeming compromise, if you cannot do otherwise. Driven as you are driven, it will be strange if you are not obliged to part with a few of your admirable punctilio's.

You will observe from what I have written, that I have not succeeded with my Mother.

I am extremely mortified and disappointed. We have had very strong debates upon it. But, besides the narrow argument of *embroiling ourselves with other peoples affairs*, as above-mentioned, she will have it, that it is your duty to comply. She says, she was *always* of opinion that Daughters should implicitly submit to the will of their Parents in the great article of Marriage; and that she governed herself accordingly, in marrying my Father; who at first was more the choice of her Parents than her own,

This

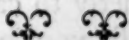
This is what she argues in behalf of her favourite Hickman, as well as for Solmes in your case.

I must not doubt, but my Mother always governed herself by this principle,—because she *says* she did. I have likewise another reason to believe it; which you shall have, tho' it may not become me to give it—That they did not live so very happily together, as one would hope people might do who married preferring each other, at the time, to the rest of the world.

Somebody shall fare never the better for this double-meant policy of my Mother, I do assure you. Such a retrospection in her arguments to him, and to his address, it is but fit that *he* should suffer for *my* mortification in failing to carry a point upon which I had set my whole heart.

Think, my dear, if in any way I can serve you. If you allow of it, I protest I will go off privately with you, and we will live and die together. Think of it. Improve upon my hint, and command me.

A little interruption.—What is breakfast to the subject I am upon?



LONDON, I am told, is the best hiding-place in the world. I have written nothing but what I will stand to at the word of command. Women love to engage in knight-errantry, now-and-then, as well as to encourage it in the men. But in your case, what I propose, will not seem to have any-thing of that nature in it. It will enable me to perform what is no more than a duty in serving and comforting a dear and worthy friend, who labours under undeserved oppression: And you will *ennoble*, as I may say, your Anna Howe, if you allow her to be your companion in affliction.

I will engage, my dear, we shall not be in town together one month, before we surmount all difficulties; and This without being beholden to any men-fellows for their protection. I

I must repeat what I have often said, That the authors of your persecutions would not have presumed to set on foot their selfish schemes against you, had they not depended upon the gentleness of your spirit: Tho' now, having gone so far, and having engaged *Old AUTHORITY* in it [Chide me, if you will!] neither *he* nor *they* know how to recede.

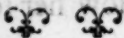
When they find you out of their reach, and know that I am with you, you'll see how they'll pull in their odious horns.

I think, however, that you should have written to your Cousin Morden the moment they had begun to treat you disgracefully.

I shall be impatient to hear whether they will attempt to carry you to your Uncle's. I remember, that Lord M's dismissed Bailiff reported of Lovelace, that he had six or seven companions as bad as himself; and that the country was always glad when they left it (*a*). He actually *has*, as I hear, such a knot of them about him now. And, depend upon it, he will not suffer them quietly to carry you to your Uncle's: And whose must you be, if he succeeds in taking you from them?

I tremble for you but upon *supposing* what may be the consequence of a conflict upon this occasion. Lovelace owes some of them vengeance. This gives me a double concern, that my Mother should refuse her consent to the protection I had set my heart upon procuring for you.

My Mother will not breakfast without me. A quarrel has its conveniencies sometimes. Yet too much Love, I think, is as bad as too little.



WE have just now had another pull. Upon my word, she is *excessively*—What shall I say?—*unpersuadable*—I must let her off with that soft word.

(*a*) Vol. I. p. 23.

Who

Who was the old Greek, that said, *He* governed Athens; his *Wife*, him; and his *Son*, her?

It was not my Mother's fault [I am writing to *you*, you know] that she did not govern my *Father*. But I am but a *Daughter*!—Yet I thought I was not quite so powerless when I was set upon carrying a point, as I find myself to be.

Adieu, my dear!—Happier times must come—And that quickly too.—The strings cannot long continue thus overstrained. They must break, or be relaxed. In either way, the Certainty must be preferable to the Suspense.

One word more.

I think in my conscience you must take one of these two alternatives: either To consent to let us go to London together privately [In which case, I will procure a vehicle, and meet you at your appointment at the Stile to which Lovelace proposes to bring his Uncle's chariot]; or, To put yourself into the protection of Lord M. and the Ladies of his family.

You have another, indeed; and that is, if you are absolutely resolved against Solmes, to meet and marry Lovelace directly.

Which-soever of these you make choice of, you will have This plea, both to yourself, and to the world, that you are concluded by the same uniform principle that has governed your whole conduct, ever since the contention between Lovelace and your Brother has been on foot: That is to say, that you have chosen a lesser evil, in hope to prevent a greater.

Adieu! and Heaven direct for the best my beloved creature, prays

Her

ANNA HOWE.

L E T.

L E T T E R XXII.

*Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, To Miss HOWE.**Thursday, April 6.*

I Thank you, my dearest friend, for the pains you have taken in accounting so affectionately for my papers not being taken away yesterday ; and for the kind protection you would have procured for me, if you could.

This kind protection was what I wished for : But my wishes, raised at first by your Love, were rather governed by my despair of other refuge [having before cast about, and not being able to determine, what I *ought* to do, and what I *could* do, in a situation so unhappy] than by a reasonable hope : For why indeed should any-body embroil themselves for others, when they can avoid it?

All my consolation is, as I have frequently said, that I have not, by my own inadvertence or folly, brought myself into this sad situation. If I *had*, I should not have dared to look up to any-body with the expectation of protection or assistance, nor to you for excuse of the trouble I give you. But nevertheless we should not be angry at a person's not doing that for ourselves, or for our friend, which she thinks she ought *not* to do ; and which she has it in her option either to *do*, or to *let it alone*. Much less have you a right to be displeased with so prudent a Mother, for not engaging herself so warmly in my favour, as you wished she would. If my own Aunt can give me up, and that against her judgment, as I may presume to say ; and if my Father and Mother, and Uncles, who once loved me so well, can join so strenuously against me ; can I expect, or ought *you*, the protection of your Mother, in *opposition* to them?

Indeed,

Indeed, my dearest Love [Permit me to be *very* serious] I am afraid I am singled out (either for my own faults, or for the faults of my family, or perhaps for the faults of both) to be a very unhappy creature!—*signally* unhappy! For see you not how irresistibly the waves of affliction come tumbling down upon me?

We have been till within these few weeks, every-one of us, too happy. No crosses, no vexations, but what we gave ourselves from the *pamperdness*, as I may call it, of our own wills. Surrounded by our heaps and stores, hoarded up as fast as acquired, we have seemed to think ourselves out of the reach of the bolts of adverse fate. I was the pride of all my friends, proud *myself* of *their* pride, and glorying in my standing. Who knows what the justice of Heaven may inflict, in order to convince us, that we are not out of the reach of misfortune; and to reduce us to a better reliance, than that we have hitherto presumptuously made?

I should have been very little the better for the *Conversation-visits* which the good Dr. Lewen used to honour me with, and for the principles *wrought* (as I may say) into my earliest mind by my pious Mrs. Norton, founded on her reverend Father's experience, as well as on her own, if I could not thus retrospect and argue, in such a strange situation as we are in. *Strange*, I may well call it; for don't you see, my dear, that we seem all to be *impelled*, as it were, by a perverse fate, which none of us are able to resist?—And yet all arising (with a strong appearance of self-punishment) from ourselves? Do not my Parents see the hopeful children, from whom they expected a perpetuity of worldly happiness to their branching family, now grown up to answer the *till* now distant hope, setting their angry faces against each other, pulling up by the roots, as I may say,

that hope which was ready to be carried into a probable certainty?

Your partial Love will be ready to acquit me of *capital* and *intentional* faults:—But oh, my dear! my calamities have humbled me enough, to make me turn my gaudy eye inward; to make me look into myself!—And what have I discovered there?—Why, my dear friend, more *secret* pride and vanity than I could have thought had lain in my unexamined heart.

If I am to be singled out to be the *punisher* of myself and family, who so lately was the *pride* of it, pray for me, my dear, that I may not be left wholly to myself; and that I may be enabled to support my character, so as to be *justly* acquitted of wilful and premeditated faults. The will of Providence be resigned to in the rest: As *that* leads, let me patiently, and unrepiningly, follow!—I shall not live always.—May but my *closing* scene be happy!

But I will not oppress you, my dearest friend, with further reflections of this sort. I will take them all into myself. Surely I have a mind that has room for them. My afflictions are too sharp to last long. The crisis is at hand. Happier times you bid me hope for. I *will* hope.

But yet, I cannot but be impatient at times, to find myself thus driven, and my character so depreciated and sunk, that were all the *future* to be happy, I should be ashamed to shew my face in public, or to look up. And all by the instigation of a selfish Brother, and envious Sister.—

But let me stop: Let me reflect!—Are not these suggestions the suggestions of the *secret* pride I have been censuring? Then, *already* so impatient! But this moment so resigned, so much better disposed
for

for reflection! Yet 'tis hard, 'tis *very* hard, to subdue an embittered spirit!—In the instant of it's trial too!—O my cruel Brother!—But now it rises again.—I will lay down a pen, I am so little able to govern.—And I will try to subdue an impatience, which (if my afflictions are sent me for corrective ends) may otherwise lead me into still more punishable errors.—

I WILL return to a subject, which I cannot fly from for ten minutes together—called upon especially as I am, by your three alternatives stated in the conclusion of your last.

As to the first; to wit, *Your advice for me to escape to London*—Let me tell you, that that other hint or proposal which accompanies it, perfectly frightens me—Surely, my dear (happy as you are, and indulgently treated as your Mother treats you) you cannot mean what you propose! What a wretch must I be, if, for *one* moment only, I could lend an ear to such a proposal as This!—*I*, to be the occasion of making such a Mother's (perhaps *shortened*) life unhappy to the last hour of it!—*Ennoble* you, my dear creature! How must such an enterprize (the rashness *public*, the motives, were they excusable, *private*) debase you!—But I will not dwell upon the subject—For your *own* sake I will not.

As to your second alternative, *To put myself into the protection of Lord M. and of the Ladies of that family*, I own to you (as I believe I have owned before) that altho' to do This would be the same thing in the eye of the world as putting myself into Mr. Lovelace's protection, yet I think I would do it rather than be Mr. Solmes's Wife, if there were evidently no other way to avoid being so.

Mr. Lovelace, you have seen, proposes to contrive a way to put me into possession of my own
Vol. II. M house;

house; and he tells me, that he will soon fill it with the Ladies of his Family, as my visitors;—upon my invitation, however, to them.—A very inconsiderate proposal I think it to be, and upon which I cannot explain myself to him. What an exertion of independency does it chalk out for me! How, were I to attend to *him* (and not to the natural consequences to which the following of his advice would lead me) might I be drawn by *gentle* words into the perpetration of the most *violent* acts!—For how could I gain possession, but either by legal litigation, which, were I *inclined* to have recourse to it (as I never can be) must take up time; or by forcibly turning out the persons whom my Father has placed there, to look after the gardens, the house, and the furniture—persons intirely attached to himself, and who, as I know, have been lately instructed by my Brother?

Your third alternative, *To meet and marry Mr. Lovelace directly*; a man with whose morals I am far from being satisfied—A step, that could not be taken with the least hope of ever obtaining pardon from or reconciliation with any of my friends;—and against which a thousand objections rise in my mind—*That* is not to be thought of.

What appears to me upon the fullest deliberation, the most eligible, if I *must* be thus driven, is the escaping to London. But I would forfeit all my hopes of happiness in this life, rather than you should go away with me, as you rashly, tho' with the kindest intention, propose. If I could get safely thither, and be private, methinks I might remain absolutely independent of Mr. Lovelace, and at liberty either to make proposals to my friends, or, should they renounce me (and I had no other or better way) to make terms with him; supposing my Cousin Morden, on his arrival, were to join with my other Relations. But they would *then* perhaps indulge

indulge me in my choice of a single life, on giving him up : The renewing to them this offer, when at my own liberty, will at least convince them, that I was in earnest when I made it first : And, upon my word, I *would* stand to it, dear as you seem to think, when you are disposed to railly me, it would cost me, *to* stand to it.

If, my dear, you can procure a vehicle for us *both*, you can perhaps procure one for me *singly* : But can it be done without embroiling *yourself* with your Mother, or *her* with our family ?—Be it coach, chariot, chaise, waggon, or horse, I matter not, provided You appear not to have a hand in my withdrawing. Only, in case it be one of the two latter, I believe I must desire you to get me an ordinary gown and coat, or habit, of some servant ; having no concert with any of our own : The more ordinary the better. They may be thrust into the wood-house ; where I can put them on ; and then slide down from the bank, that separates the Wood-yard from the Green Lane.

But, alas ! my dear, this, even *this* alternative, is not without difficulties, which, to a spirit so little enterprising as mine, seem in a manner insuperable. These are my reflections upon it.

I am afraid, in the first place, that I shall not have time for the requisite preparations for an escape.

Should I be either detected in those preparations, or pursued and overtaken in my flight, and so brought back, then would they think themselves doubly warranted to compel me to have their Solmes : And, conscious of an intended fault, perhaps I should be the less able to contend with them.

But were I even to get safely to London, I know no-body there but by name ; and those the tradesmen to our family ; who no doubt would be the first wrote to and engaged to find me out. And

should Mr. Lovelace discover where I was, and he and my Brother meet, what mischiefs might ensue between them, whether I were willing or not to return to Harlowe-Place!

But supposing I could remain there concealed, to what might not my Youth, my Sex, and unacquaintance with the ways of that great, wicked town, expose me! — I should hardly dare to go to church for fear of being discovered. People would wonder how I lived. Who knows but I might pass for a kept mistress; and that, altho' no-body came to me, yet, that every time I went out, it might be imagined to be in pursuance of some assignation?

You, my dear, who alone would know where to direct to me, would be watched in all your steps, and in all your messages; and your Mother, at present not highly pleased with our correspondence, would then have reason to be *more* displeased; and might not differences follow between her and you, that would make me very unhappy, were I to know them? And this the more likely, as you take it so unaccountably (and, give me leave to say, so ungenerously) into your head, to revenge yourself upon the innocent Mr. Hickman, for all the displeasure your Mother gives you?

Were Lovelace to find out my place of abode, that would be the same thing in the eye of the world as if I had actually gone off with him: For would he, do you think, be prevailed upon to forbear visiting me? And then his unhappy character (a foolish man!) would be no credit to any young creature desirous of concealment. Indeed the world, let me escape whither, and to whomsoever I could, would conclude *him* to be the contriver of it.

These are the difficulties which arise to me on revolving this scheme; which, nevertheless, might appear surmountable to a more enterprising spirit in my
circum-

circumstances. If you, my dear, think them surmountable in any one of the cases put (and to be sure I can take no course, but what must have *some* difficulty in it) be pleased to let me know your free and full thoughts upon it.

Had *you*, my dear friend, been married, then should I have had no doubt but that you and Mr. Hickman would have afforded an asylum to a poor creature more than half lost in her own apprehension for want of one kind protecting friend!

You say, I should have written to my Cousin Morden the moment I was treated disgracefully: But could I have believed that my friends would not have softened by degrees when they saw my antipathy to their Solmes?

I had thoughts indeed several times of writing to my Cousin: But by the time an Answer could have come, I imagined all would have been over, as if it had never been: So from day to day, from week to week I hoped on: And, after all, I might as reasonably fear (as I have heretofore said) that my Cousin would be brought to side against me, as that some of those I have named would.

And then to appeal to a *Cousin* [I must have written with *warmth*, to engage him] against a *Father*; This was not a desirable thing to set about. Then I had not, you know, one soul of my side; my mother herself against me. To be sure my Cousin would have suspended his judgment till he could have arrived. He might not have been in haste to come; hoping the malady would cure itself: But *bad* he written, his Letters probably would have run in the qualifying style; to persuade *me* to submit, or *them* only to relax. Had his Letters been more on *my* side than on *theirs*, they would not have regarded them: Nor perhaps *himself*, had he come and been an advocate for me: For you see how strangely de-

terminated they are ; how they have over-awed or got in every-body ; so that no one dare open their lips in my behalf. And you have heard that my Brother pushes his measures with the more violence, that all may be over with me before my Cousin's expected arrival.

But you tell me, That, in order to gain time, I must *palliate* ; that I must seem to compromise with my friends : But how *palliate* ? how *seem* to compromise ? You would not have me endeavour to make them believe, that I will consent to what I never intend to consent to ! You would not have me try to gain time, with a view to *deceive* !

To *do evil, that good may come of it*, is forbidden : And shall I do evil, yet know not whether good may come of it or not ?

Forbid it, Heaven ! that Clarissa Harlowe should have it in her thought to *serve*, or even to *save* herself at the expence of her sincerity, and by a *studied* deceit !

And is there, after all, no way to escape one great evil, but by plunging myself into another ?—What an ill-fated creature am I ?—Pray for me, my dearest Nancy !—My mind is at present so much disturbed, that I hardly can pray for myself.—

L E T T E R XXIII.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, To Miss Howe.

Thursday Night.

THE alarming hurry I mentioned under my date of last night, and Betty's saucy dark hints, come out to be owing to what I guessed they were ; that is to say, to the private intimation Mr. Lovelace contrived our family should have of his insolent resolution [*insolent* I must call it] to prevent my being carried to my Uncle's.

I saw

I saw at the time that it was as *wrong* with respect to answering his own view, as it was *insolent* : For could he think, as Betty (I suppose from her betters) justly observed, That Parents would be insulted out of their right to the disposal of their own child, by a violent man, whom they hate ; and who could have no pretension to dispute that right with them, unless what he had from *her* who had none over herself ? And how must this insolence of his, aggravated as my Brother is able to aggravate it, exasperate them against me ?

The rash man has indeed so far gained his point, as to intimidate them from attempting to carry me away : But he has put them upon a surer and a more desperate measure : And this has driven me also into one as desperate ; the consequence of which, altho' he could not foresee it (*a*), may perhaps too well answer his great end, little as he deserves to have it answered.

In short, I have done, as far as I know, the most rash thing that ever I did in my life.

But let me give you the motive, and then the action will follow of course.

About Six o'clock this evening, my Aunt (who stays here all night ; on my account, no doubt) came up, and tapped at my door ; for I was writing, and had locked myself in. I opened it ; and she entering, thus delivered herself :

I come once more to visit you, my dear ; but solely against my will ; because it is to impart to you matters of the utmost concern to you, and to the whole family.

• (*a*) She was mistaken in this. Mr. Lovelace *did* foresee this consequence. All his contrivances led to it, and the whole family, as he boasts, unknown to themselves, were but so many Puppets danced by his wires. See Vol. I. p. 192, 193.

What, Madam, is now to be done with me ? said I, wholly attentive.

You will not be hurried away to your Uncle's, child ; let that comfort you.—They see your aversion to go.—You will not be obliged to go to your Uncle Antony's.

How you revive me, Madam ! This is a cordial to my heart !

I little thought, my dear, what was to follow this supposed condescension.

And then I ran over with blessings for this good news (and she permitted me so to do, by her silence) ; congratulating myself, that I *thought* my Father could not resolve to carry things to the last extremity.—

Hold, Niece, said she, at last—You must not give yourself too much joy upon the occasion neither.—Don't be surpris'd, my dear.—Why look you upon me, child, with so affecting an earnestness ?—But you must be Mrs. Solmes, for all that.

I was dumb.

She then told me, that they had had undoubted information, that a certain desperate *ruffian* (I must excuse her that word, she said) had prepared armed men to way-lay my Brother and Uncles, and seize me, and carry me off.—Surely, she said, I was not consenting to a violence that might be followed by murder on one side or the other ; perhaps on both.

I was still silent.

That therefore my Father (still more exasperated than before) had changed his resolution as to my going to my Uncle's ; and was determin'd next Tuesday to set out thither *himself* with my Mother ; and that (for it was to no purpose to conceal a resolution so soon to be put in execution)—I must not dispute it any longer—on Wednesday I must give my hand—as they would have me.

She proceeded, That orders were already given for

for a Licence : That the ceremony was to be performed in my own Chamber, in presence of all my friends, except of my Father and Mother ; who would not return, nor see me, till all was over, and till they had a good account of my behaviour.

The very intelligence, my dear !—the very intelligence This, which Lovelace gave me !

I was still dumb—Only sighing, as if my heart would break.

She went on, comforting me, as she thought.

She laid before me the merit of obedience ; and told me, that if it were my desire that my Norton should be present at the Ceremony, it would be complied with : That the pleasure I should receive from reconciling all my friends to me, and in their congratulations upon it, must needs overbalance, with such a one as me, the difference of persons, however preferable I might think the one man to the other : That Love was a fleeting thing, little better than a name, where Morality and Virtue did not distinguish the object of it : That a choice made by its dictates was seldom happy ; at least not *durably* so : Nor was it to be wondered at, when it naturally exalted the Object above its merits, and made the Lover blind to faults, that were visible to every-body else : So that when a nearer intimacy stript it of its imaginary perfections, it left frequently both sides surpris'd, that they could be thus cheated ; and that then the Indifference became stronger than the Love ever was. That a woman gave a man great advantages, and inspir'd him with great vanity, when she avow'd her Love for him, and preference of him ; and was generally requited with insolence and contempt : Whereas the confessedly-obliged man, it was probable, would be all reverence and gratitude— and I cannot tell what.

‘ You,

‘ You, my dear, said she, believe you shall be unhappy, if you have Mr. Solmes : Your Parents think the contrary ; and that you will be undoubtedly so, were you to have Mr. Lovelace, whose morals are unquestionably bad : Suppose it were your sad lot to be unhappy with either, let me beseech you to consider, what great consolation you will have on one hand, if you pursue your Parents advice, that you did so ; what mortification on the other, that, by following your own, you have no-body to blame but yourself.’

This, you remember, my dear, was an argument enforced upon me by Mrs. Norton.

These and other observations which she made, were worthy of my Aunt Hervey’s good sense and experience, and, applied to almost any young creature who stood in opposition to her Parents will, but one who had offered to make the sacrifices I have offered to make, ought to have had their due weight. But altho’ it was easy to answer some of them in my own particular case ; yet, having over and over, to my Mother, *before* my confinement, and to my Brother and Sister, and even to my Aunt Hervey, *since*, said what I must now have repeated, I was so much mortified and afflicted at the cruel tidings she brought me, that, however attentive I was to what she said, I had neither power nor will to answer one word ; and, had she not stopped of herself, she might have gone on an hour longer, without interruption from me.

Observing this, and that I only sat weeping, my handkerchief covering my face, and my bosom heaving ready to burst ; What ! no answer, my dear ?—Why so much *silent* grief ? You know I always loved you. You know, that I have no interest in the affair. You would not permit Mr. Solmes to acquaint you with some things which would have

set

set your heart against Mr. Lovelace. Shall I tell you some of the matters charged against him?—Shall I, my dear?

Still I answered only by my tears and sighs.

Well, child, you shall be told these things afterwards, when you will be in a better state of mind to hear them; and then you will rejoice in the escape you will have had. It will be some excuse, then, for you to plead for your behaviour to Mr. Solmes, that you could not have believed Mr. Lovelace had been so very vile a man.

My heart fluttered with impatience and anger at being so plainly talked to as the Wife of this man; but yet I then chose to be silent. If I had spoken, it would have been with vehemence.

Strange, my dear, such silence!—Your concern is infinitely more on this side the day, than it will be on the other.—But let me ask you, and do not be displeased, Will you chuse to see what generous stipulations for you there are in the Settlements?—You have knowledge beyond your years—Give the writings a perusal: Do, my dear: They are ingrossed, and ready for signing, and have been for some time.—Excuse me, my love—I mean not to disorder you:—Your Father would oblige me to bring them up, and to leave them with you. He commands you to read them.—*But* to read them, Niece—since they are ingrossed, and *were* before you made them absolutely hopeless.

And then, to my great terror, out she drew some parchments from her handkerchief, which she had kept (unobserved by me) under her apron; and, rising, put them in the opposite window. Had she produced a serpent, I could not have been more frightened.

Oh! my dearest Aunt, turning away my face, and holding out my hands: Hide from my eyes those
those

those horrid parchments!—Let me conjure you to tell me—By all the tenderness of near relationship, and upon your Honour, and by your Love for me, say, Are they absolutely resolved, that, come what will, I must be That man's?

My dear, you must have Mr. Solmes: Indeed you must.

Indeed I never will! This, as I have said over and over, is not originally my Father's will.—Indeed I never will—And that is All I will say!

It is your Father's will *now*, replied my Aunt: And, considering how all the family is threatened by Mr. Lovelace, and the resolution he has certainly taken to force you out of their hands, I cannot but say they are in the right, not to be bullied out of their child.

Well, Madam, then nothing remains for me to say. I am made desperate. I care not what becomes of me.

Your piety, and your prudence, my dear, and Mr. Lovelace's immoral character, together with his daring insults, and threatenings, which ought to incense *you*, as much as any-body, are every one's dependence. We are sure the time will come, when you'll think very differently of the steps your friends take to disappoint a man who has made himself so justly obnoxious to them all.

She withdrew; leaving me full of grief and indignation:—And as much out of humour with Mr. Lovelace as with any-body; who, by his conceited contrivances, has made things worse for me than before; depriving me of the hopes I had of gaining time to receive your advice, and private assistance to get to town; and leaving me no other choice, in all appearance, than either to throw myself upon his family, or to be made miserable for ever with Mr. Solmes. But I was still resolved to avoid both these evils, if possible.

I founded Betty in the first place (whom my Aunt sent up, not thinking it proper, as Betty told me, that I should be left by myself, and who, I found, knew their designs) whether it were not probable that they would forbear, at my earnest intreaty, to push matters to the threatened extremity.

But she confirmed all my Aunt said; rejoicing (as she said they All did) that Mr. Lovelace had given them so good a pretence to save me from him now, and for ever.

She ran on about equipages bespoken; talked of my Brother's and Sister's exultations that now the whole family would soon be reconciled to each other: Of the servants joy upon it: Of the expected Licence: Of a visit to be paid me by Dr. Lewen, or another Clergyman, whom they named not to *her*; which was to crown the work: And of other preparations, so particular, as made me dread that they designed to surprise me into a still nearer day than next Wednesday.

These things made me excessively uneasy. I knew not what to resolve upon.

At one time, What have I to do, thought I, but to throw myself at once into the protection of Lady Betty Lawrance?—But then, in resentment of his *fine* contrivances, which had so abominably disconcerted me, I soon resolved to the contrary: And at last concluded to ask the favour of another half-hour's conversation with my Aunt.

I sent Betty to her with my request.

She came.

I put it to her, in the most earnest manner, to tell me, whether I might not obtain the favour of a fortnight's respite?

She assured me, it would not be granted.

Would a week? Surely a week would?

She believed a week might, if I would promise

two

two things : The first, upon my honour, not to write a line out of the house, in that week : For it was still suspected, she said, that I found means to write to *somebody*. And, secondly, to marry Mr. Solmes, at the expiration of it.

Impossible ! Impossible ! I said with passion.—What ! might I not be obliged with one week, without such a horrid condition as the last ?

She would go down, she said, that she might not seem of her own head to put upon me what I thought a hardship so great.

She went down : And came up again.

Did I want, was the answer, to give the vilest of men an opportunity to put his murderous schemes into execution ?—It was time for them to put an end to my obstinacy (they were tired out with me) and to his hopes at once. And an end *should* be put on Tuesday or Wednesday next, at farthest ; unless I would give my honour to comply with the condition upon which my Aunt had been so good as to allow me a longer time.

I even stamped with impatience !—I called upon her to witness, that I was guiltless of the consequence of this compulsion ; This *barbarous* compulsion, I called it ; let that consequence be what it would.

My Aunt chid me in an higher strain than ever she did before.

While I, in a half-frensy, insisted upon seeing my Father : Such usage, I said, set me above fear. I would rejoice to owe my death to him, as I did my life.

I did go down half-way of the stairs, resolved to throw myself at his feet where-ever he was.—My Aunt was frightened. She owned, that she feared for my head. Indeed I was in a perfect frensy for a few minutes—But hearing my Brother's voice, as talking to somebody in my Sister's apartment just by, I
stopt ;

stopt; and heard the barbarous designer say, speaking to my Sister, This works charmingly, my dear Arabella!

It does! It does! said she, in an exulting accent.

Let us keep it up, said my Brother.—The villain is caught in his own trap!—Now must she be what we would have her be.

Do you keep my Father to it; I'll take care of my Mother, said Bella.

Never fear, said he!—And a laugh of congratulation to each other, and derision of me (as I made it out) quite turned my frantic humour into a vindictive one.

My Aunt then just coming down to me, and taking my hand, led me up; and tried to sooth me.

My raving was turned into fullness.

She preached patience and obedience to me.

I was silent.

At last she desired me to assure her, that I would offer no violence to myself.

God, I said, had given me more grace, I hoped, than to permit me to be guilty of so horrid a rashness. I was his creature, and not my own.

She then took leave of me; and I insisted upon her taking down with her the odious parchments.

Seeing me in so ill an humour, and very earnest that she should take them with her, she took them; but said, That my Father should not know that she did: And hoped I would better consider of the matter, and be calmer next time they were offered to my perusal.

I revolved after she was gone all that my Brother and Sister had said. I dwelt upon their triumphings over me; and found rise in my mind a rancour that was new to me; and which I could not withstand.—And putting every-thing together, dreading the near day, what could I do?—Am I in any manner excusable

able for what I *did* do?—If I shall be condemned by the world, who know not my provocations, may I be acquitted by you?—If *not*, I am unhappy indeed!—For This I did.

Having shaken off the impertinent Betty, I wrote to Mr. Lovelace, to let him know, ‘That all that was threatened at my Uncle Antony’s, was intended to be executed *here*. That I had come to a resolution to throw myself upon the protection of *either of his two Aunts*, who would afford it me—In short, that by endeavouring to obtain leave on Monday to dine in the Ivy Summer-house, I would, if possible, meet him without the garden-door, at two, three, four, or five o’clock on Monday afternoon, as I should be able. That in the mean time he should acquaint me, *whether I might hope for either of those Ladies protection*: And if I might, I absolutely insisted that *he should leave me with either, and go to London himself, or remain at Lord M’s; nor offer to visit me, till I were satisfied that nothing could be done with my friends in an amicable way; and that I could not obtain possession of my own estate, and leave to live upon it*: And particularly, *that he should not hint marriage to me, till I consented to hear him upon that subject*.—I added, that if he could prevail upon one of the Misses Montague to *favour me with her company on the road*, it would make me abundantly more easy in the thoughts of carrying into effect a resolution which I had not come to, altho’ so driven, but with the utmost reluctance and concern; and which would throw such a slur upon my reputation in the eye of the world, as perhaps I should never be able to wipe off.’

This was the purport of what I wrote; and down into the garden I slid with it in the dark, which at another time I should not have had the courage to

do;

do; and deposited it, and came up again unknown to any-body.

My mind so dreadfully misgave me when I returned, that to divert in some measure my increasing uneasiness, I had recourse to my private pen; and in a very short time ran this length.

And now, that I am come to this part, my uneasy reflections begin again to pour in upon me. Yet what can I do?— I believe I shall take it back again the first thing I do in the morning— Yet what *can* I do?

And who knows, but they may have a still earlier day in their intention, than that which will too soon come?

I hope to deposit this early in the morning for you, as I shall return from resuming my Letter, if I do resume it, as my *inwardest* mind bids me.

Altho' it is now near two o'clock, I have a good mind to slide down once more, in order to take back my Letter. Our doors are always locked and barred up at eleven; but the seats of the lesser hall windows being almost even with the ground without, and the shutters not difficult to open, I could easily get out.

Yet why should I be thus uneasy, since, should the Letter go, I can but hear what Mr. Lovelace says to it? His Aunts live at too great a distance for him to have an immediate Answer from them; so I can scruple going to them till I have invitation. I can *insist* upon one of his Cousins meeting me, as I have hinted, and accompanying me in the chariot; and he may not be able to obtain that favour from either of them. Twenty things may happen to afford me a suspension at least: Why should I be so very uneasy?— When likewise I can take back my Letter early, before it is probable he will have the thought of finding it there. Yet he owns he spends three parts of his days, and has done for this fort-

night past, in loitering about sometimes in one disguise, sometimes in another, besides the attendance given by his trusty servant when he himself is not *in waiting*, as he calls it.

But these strange forebodings!—Yet I can, if you advise, cause the chariot he shall bring with him to carry me directly for town, whither in my London scheme, if you were to approve it, I had proposed to go: And This will save you the trouble of procuring for me a vehicle; as well as prevent any suspicion from your Mother of your contributing to my escape.

But, solicitous for your advice, and approbation too, if I *can* have it, I will put an end to this Letter.

Adieu, my dearest friend, adieu!

LETTER XXIV.

Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, To Miss HOWE.

Friday Morning, Seven o'Clock (April 7.).

MY Aunt Hervey, who is a very early riser, was walking in the garden (Betty attending her, as I saw from my window this morning) when I arose; for after such a train of fatigue and restless nights, I had unhappily overslept myself: So all I durst venture upon, was, to step down to my poultry-yard, and deposit mine of yesterday, and last night. And I am just come up; for she is still in the garden. This prevents me from going to resume my Letter, as I think still to do; and hope it will not be too late.

I said, I had unhappily overslept myself. I went to bed at about half an hour after Two. I told the quarters till Five; after which I dropt asleep, and awaked not till past Six, and then in great terror, from a dream, which has made such an impression upon me, that, slightly as I think of dreams, I cannot help taking this opportunity to relate it to you.

‘Methought

‘ Methought my Brother, my Uncle Antony, and Mr. Solmes, had formed a plot to destroy Mr. Lovelace; who discovering it, and believing I had a hand in it, turned all his rage against me. I thought he made them all fly into foreign parts upon it; and afterwards seizing upon me, carried me into a church-yard; and there, notwithstanding all my prayers and tears, and protestations of innocence, stabbed me to the heart, and then tumbled me into a deep grave ready dug, among two or three half-dissolved carcases; throwing in the dirt and earth upon me with his hands, and trampling it down with his feet.’

I awoke in a cold sweat, trembling, and in agonies; and still the frightful images raised by it, remain upon my memory.

But why should I, who have such *real* evils to contend with, regard *imaginary* ones? This, no doubt, was owing to my disturbed imagination; huddling together wildly all the frightful ideas which my Aunt’s communications and discourse, my Letter to Mr. Lovelace, my own uneasiness upon it, and the apprehensions of the dreaded Wednesday, furnished me with.

Eight o’Clock.

THE man, my dear, has got the Letter!—What a strange diligence! I wish he mean me well, that he takes so much pains!—Yet, to be ingenuous, I must own, that I should be displeased if he took less—I wish, however, he had been an hundred miles off!—What an advantage have I given him over me!

Now the Letter is out of my power, I have more uneasiness and regret than I had before. For, till now, I had a doubt whether it should or should not go: And now I think it ought *not* to have gone. And yet is there any other way than to do as I have done, if I would avoid Solmes? But what a giddy

creature shall I be thought, if I pursue the course to which this Letter must lead me?

My dearest friend, tell me, Have I done wrong?—Yet do not *say* I have, if you *think* it; for should all the world besides condemn me, I shall have some comfort, if *you* do not. The first time I ever besought you to flatter me. That, of itself, is an indication that I have done wrong, and am afraid of hearing the truth—O tell me (but yet do not tell me) if I have done wrong!

Friday, Eleven o'Clock.

My Aunt has made me another visit. She began what she had to say with letting me know, That my friends are all persuaded that I still correspond with Mr. Lovelace; as is plain, she said, by hints and menaces he throws out, which shew that he is apprised of several things that have passed between my relations and me, sometimes within a very little while after they have happened.

Altho' I approve not of the method he stoops to take to come at his intelligence, yet it is not prudent in me to clear myself by the ruin of the corrupted servant (altho' his villainy has neither my connivance, nor approbation) since my doing so might occasion the detection of my own correspondence; and so frustrate all the hopes I have to avoid this Solmes. Yet it is not at all unlikely, that this very agent of Mr. Lovelace acts a double part between my Brother and him: How else can *our family* know (so soon too) his menaces upon the passages they hint at?

I assured my Aunt, that I was too much ashamed of the treatment I met with (and that for every-one's sake as well as for my own) to acquaint Mr. Lovelace with the particulars of that treatment, even were the means of corresponding with him afforded me: That I had reason to think, that if he were to know of it from me, we must be upon such terms, that he would
not

not scruple making some visits, which would give me great apprehensions. They all knew, I said, that I had no communication with any of my Father's servants, except my Sister's Betty Barnes: For altho' I had a good opinion of them all, and believed, if left to their own inclinations, that they would be glad to serve me; yet, finding by their shy behaviour, that they were under particular direction, I had forborne ever since my Hannah had been so disgracefully dismissed, so much as to speak to any of them, for fear I should be the occasion of *their* losing their places too: They must, therefore, account among *themselves* for the intelligence Mr. Lovelace met with, since neither my Brother nor Sister (as Betty had frequently, in praise of their open hearts, informed me) nor perhaps their favourite Mr. Solmes, were at all careful whom they spoke before, when they had any-thing to throw out against him, or even against *me*, whom they took great pride to join with him on this occasion.

It was but too natural, my Aunt said, for my friends to suppose, that he had his intelligence (part of it at least) from me; who, thinking myself hardly treated, might complain of it, if not to him, to Miss Howe; which, perhaps, might be the same thing; for they knew Miss Howe spoke as freely of them, as they could do of Mr. Lovelace; and must have the particulars she spoke of, from somebody who knew what was done here. That this determined my Father to bring the whole matter to a speedy issue, lest fatal consequences should ensue.

I perceive you are going to speak with warmth, proceeded she [*And so I was*].—For my own part I am sure, you would not write any-thing, if you *do* write, to inflame so violent a spirit.—But this is not the end of my present visit.

You cannot, my dear, but be convinced, that your Father *will* be obeyed. The more you contend

against his will, the more he thinks himself obliged to assert his authority. Your Mother desires me to tell you, that if you will give her the least hopes of a dutiful compliance, she will be willing to see you in her closet just now, while your Father is gone to take a walk in the garden.

Astonishing perseverance! said I—I am tired with making declarations and with pleadings on this subject; and had hoped, that my resolution being so well known, I should not have been further urged upon it.

You mistake the purport of my present visit, Miss (looking gravely)—Heretofore you have been *desired* and *prayed* to obey and oblige your friends. *Intreaty* is at an end: They give it up. Now it is *resolved upon*, that your Father's will *is to be obeyed*; as it is fit it should. Some things are laid at your door, as if you concurred with Lovelace's threatened violence to carry you off, which your Mother will not believe. She will tell you her own good opinion of you. She will tell you how much she still loves you; and what she expects of you on the approaching occasion. But yet, that she may not be exposed to an opposition, which would the more provoke her, she desires that you will first assure her that you go down with a resolution to do that with a grace which must be done with or without a grace. And besides, she wants to give you some advice how to proceed in order to reconcile yourself to your Father, and to every-body else. Will you go down, Miss Clary, or will you not?

I said, I should think myself happy, could I be admitted to my Mother's presence, after so long a banishment from it; but that I could not wish it upon those terms.

And this is your answer, Niece?

It must be my answer, Madam. Come what may,
I never

CLARISSA HARLOWE. 183

I never will have Mr. Solmes. It is cruel to press this matter so often upon me.--I never will have that man.

Down she went with displeasure. I could not help it. I was quite tired with so many attempts, all to the same purpose. I am amazed that They are not!—So little variation! And no concession on either side!

I will go down and deposit this; for Betty has seen I have been writing. The saucy creature took a napkin, and dipt it in water, and with a sneering air, Here, Miss; holding the wet corner to me.

What's That for? said I.

Only, Miss, one of the fingers of your right-hand, if you please to look at it.

It was inky.

I gave her a look; but said nothing.

But lest I should have another search, I will close here.

CL. HARLOWE.

LETTER XXV.

Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, To Miss HOWE.

Friday, One o' Clock.

I Have a Letter from Mr. Lovelace, full of transports, vows, and promises. I will send it to you inclosed. You'll see how 'he engages in it for Lady Betty's protection, and for Miss Charlotte Montague's accompanying me. I have nothing to do, but to persevere, he says, and prepare to receive 'the personal congratulations of his whole family.'

But you'll see, how he presumes upon my being his, as the consequence of throwing myself into that Lady's protection.

'The chariot-and-six is to be ready at the place 'he mentions. You'll see as to the slur upon my

‘reputation which I am so apprehensive about, how boldly he argues.’ Generously enough, indeed, were I to be *his*; and had given him reason to believe that I would.—But that I have not done.

How one step brings on another with this incroaching Sex! How soon may a young creature, who gives a man the least encouragement, be carried beyond her intentions, and out of her own power! You would imagine, by what he writes, that I have given him reason to think that my aversion to Mr. Solmes is all owing to my favour for him.

The dreadful thing is, that, comparing what he writes from his intelligencer of what is designed against me (tho’ he seems not to know the threatened day) with what my Aunt and Betty assure me of, there can be no hope for me, but that I must be Solmes’s wife, if I stay here.

I had better have gone to my Uncle Antony’s at this rate. I should have gained time, at least, by it. This is the fruit of his fine contrivances!

‘What we are to do, and how good he is to be: How I am to direct all his future steps.’ All this shews, as I said before, that he is sure of me.

However, I have replied to the following effect: ‘That altho’ I had given him room to expect, that I would put myself into the *protection of one of the Ladies of his family*, yet as I have three days to come, between this and Monday, and as I still hope that my friends will relent, or that Mr. Solmes will give up a point they will find it impossible to carry; I shall not look upon myself as *absolutely bound by the appointment*: And expect therefore, if I recede, that I shall not again be called to account for it by him. That I think it necessary to acquaint him, that if by throwing myself upon Lady Betty Lawrance’s protection, as he proposed, he understands, *that I mean directly to put myself in-*

‘to his power, he is very much mistaken: For that there are many points in which I must be satisfied; several matters to be adjusted, even after I have left this house (if I do leave it) before I can think of giving him any particular encouragement: That in the first Place he must expect that I will do my utmost to procure my Father’s Reconciliation and Approbation of my future steps; and that I will govern myself intirely by his commands, in every reasonable point, as much as if I had not left his house: That if he imagines, I shall not reserve to myself this liberty, but that my withdrawing is to give him any advantages which he would not otherwise have had; I am determined to stay where I am, and abide the event, in hopes that my friends will still accept of my reiterated promise, *Never to marry him, or any-body else, without their consent.*’

This I will deposit as soon as I can. And as he thinks things are near their crisis, I dare say it will not be long before I have an Answer to it.

Friday, Four o’ Clock.

‘I AM really ill. I was used to make the best of any little accidents that befell me, for fear of making my *then* affectionate friends uneasy: But now I shall make the worst of my indisposition, in hopes to obtain a suspension of the threatened evil of Wednesday next.’ And if I do obtain it, I will postpone my appointment with Mr. Lovelace.

Betty has told them that I am very much indisposed. But I have no pity from any-body.

I believe, I am become the object of every-one’s aversion; and that they would all be glad I were dead. Indeed, I believe it. ‘What ails the perverse creature,’ cries one?—‘Is she love-sick,’ another?

I was in the Ivy Summer-house, and came out shivering with cold, as if aguishly affected. Betty observed this, and reported it.—‘O, no matter!—Let
‘her

‘her shiver on!—Cold cannot hurt her. Obstinacy
 ‘will defend her from harm. Perverseness is a Bracer
 ‘to a love-sick girl, and more effectual than the Cold
 ‘Bath to make hardy, altho’ the constitution be ever
 ‘so tender.’

This said by a cruel Brother, and heard said by
 the dearer friends of one, for whom, but a few
 months ago, every-body was apprehensive at the least
 blast of wind to which she exposed herself!

Betty, it must be owned, has an admirable me-
 mory on these occasions. Nothing of this nature is
 lost by her repetition: Even the very air with which
 she repeats what she hears said, renders it unnecessary
 to ask, Who spoke This or That severe thing.

Friday, Six o’ Clock.

My Aunt, who again stays all night, has just left
 me. She came to tell me the result of my friends
 deliberations about me. It is this.

Next Wednesday morning they are all to be as-
 sembled: To wit, my Father, Mother, my Uncles,
 Herself, and my Uncle Hervey; my Brother and
 Sister of course: My good Mrs. Norton is likewise
 to be admitted: And Dr. Lewen is to be at hand, to
 exhort me, it seems, if there be occasion: But my
 Aunt is not certain whether he is to be among them,
 or to tarry till called in.

When this awful Court is assembled, the poor
 prisoner is to be brought in, supported by Mrs. Nor-
 ton; who is to be first tutored to instruct me in the
 duty of a child; which it seems I have forgotten.

Nor is the success at all doubted, my Aunt says:
 Since it is not believed that I can be hardened enough
 to withstand the expostulations of so venerable a ju-
 dicature, altho’ I have withstood those of several of
 them separately. And still the less, as she hints at ex-
 traordinary condescensions from my Father. But what

condescensions, from even my Father, can induce me to make such a sacrifice as is expected from me?

Yet my spirits will never bear up, I doubt, at such a tribunal—My Father presiding in it.

Indeed I expected, that my trials would not be at an end till he had admitted me into his awful presence.

What is hoped from me, she says, is, That I will chearfully, on Tuesday night, if not before, sign the articles; and so turn the succeeding day's solemn convention into a day of festivity. I am to have the Licence sent me up, however, and once more the Settlements, that I may see how much in earnest they are.

She further hinted, that my Father himself would bring up the Settlements for me to sign.

O my dear! what a trial will This be!—How shall I be able to refuse to my Father the writing of my name?—To my Father, from whose presence I have been so long banished!—He commanding and intreating, perhaps, in a breath!—How shall I be able to refuse this to my Father!

They are sure, she says, something is working on Mr. Lovelace's part, and perhaps on mine: And my Father would sooner follow me to the grave, than see me *his* Wife.

I said, I was not well: That the very apprehensions of these trials were already insupportable to me; and would increase upon me, as the time approached; and I was afraid I should be extremely ill.

They had prepared themselves for such an *artifice* as That, was my Aunt's unkind word; and she could assure me, it would stand me in no stead.

Artifice! repeated I: And this from my Aunt Hervey?

Why, my dear, said she, do you think people are fools?—Can they not see, how dismally you endeavour to sigh yourself down within-doors?—How you hang down your *sweet face* (those were the words she

she was pleased to use) upon your bosom:—How you totter, as it were, and hold by this chair, and by that door-post, when you know that any-body sees you [This, my dear Miss Howe, is an aspersio[n] to fasten hypocrisy and contempt upon me: My Brother's or Sister's aspersio[n]!—I am not capable of arts so low]. But the moment you are down with your poultry, or advancing upon your garden-walk, and, as you imagine, out of every-body's sight, it is seen how nimbly you trip along; and what an alertness governs all your motions.

I should hate myself, said I, were I capable of such poor *artifices* as these. I must be a fool to use them, as well as a mean creature; for have I not had experience enough, that my friends are incapable of being moved in much more *affecting instances*?—But you'll see how I shall be by Tuesday.

My dear, you will not offer any violence to your health?—I hope, God has given you more grace than to do that.

I hope he has, Madam. But there is violence enough offered, and threatened, to affect my health; and so it will be found, without my needing to have recourse to any other, or to *artifice* either.

I'll only tell you one thing, my dear: And that is; Ill or well, the Ceremony will probably be performed before Wednesday night:—But This, also, I will tell you, altho' beyond my present commission, that Mr. Solmes will be under an engagement (if you should require it of him as a favour) after the Ceremony is passed, and Lovelace's hopes thereby utterly extinguished, to leave you at your Father's, and return to his own house every evening, until you are brought to a full sense of your duty, and consent to acknowledge your change of name.

There was no opening of my lips to such a speech as This. I was dumb.

And

And these, my dear Miss Howe, are They, who, *some* of them at least, have called me a romantic girl!—This is my chimerical Brother, and wife Sister; both joining their heads together, I dare say. And yet, my Aunt told me, that the last part was what took in my Mother; who had, till that expedient was found out, insisted, that her child should not be married, if, thro' grief or opposition, she should be ill, or fall into fits.

This intended violence my Aunt often excused, by the certain information they pretended to have, of some plots or machinations, that were ready to break out, from Mr. Lovelace (*a*): The effects of which were thus cunningly to be frustrated.

Friday, Nine o' Clock.

AND now, my dear, what shall I conclude upon? You see how determined—But how can I expect your advice will come time enough to stand me in any stead? For here, I have been down, and already have another Letter from Mr. Lovelace [*The man lives upon the spot, I think*]: And I must write to him, either that I will or will not stand to my first resolution of escaping hence on Monday next. If I let him know, that I will not (appearances so strong *against* him, and *for* Solmes, even stronger than when I made the appointment) will it not be justly deemed my own fault, if I am compelled to marry their odious man? And if any mischief ensue from Mr. Lovelace's rage and disappointment, will it not lie at my door?—Yet, he offers so fair!—Yet, on the other hand, to incur the censure of the world, as a giddy creature—But that, as he hints, I have

• (*a*) It may not be amiss to observe in this place, That Mr. Lovelace artfully contrived to drive the Family on, by permitting *his* and *their* agent Leman to report machinations, which he had neither intention nor power to execute.

already

already incurred—What can I do?—O that my Cousin Morden—But what signifies wishing?

I will here give you the substance of Mr. Lovelace's Letter. The Letter itself I will send, when I have answered it; but that I will defer doing as long as I can, in hopes of finding reason to retract an appointment on which so much depends. And yet it is necessary you should have all before you as I go along, that you may be the better able to advise me in this dreadful crisis.

‘He begs my pardon for writing with so much assurance; attributing it to his unbounded transport; and intirely acquiesces in my will. He is full of alternatives and proposals. He offers *to attend me directly to Lady Betty's*; or, if I had rather, *to my own Estate*; and that my Lord M. shall protect me there’ [He knows not, my dear, my reasons for rejecting this inconsiderate advice]. ‘In either case, as soon as he sees me safe, he will go up to London, or whither I please; and not come near me, but by my own permission; and till I am satisfied in every-thing I am doubtful of, as well with regard to his Reformation, as to Settlements, &c.

‘To *conduct me to You*, my dear, is another of his proposals; not doubting, he says, but your Mother will receive me (a): Or, if That be not agreeable to you, or to your Mother, or to me, he will put me *into Mr. Hickman's protection*; whom, no doubt, he says, you can influence; and that it may be given out, that I am gone to Bath, or Bristol, or Abroad; where-ever I please.

‘Again, If it be more agreeable, he proposes *to attend me privately to London*, where he will procure handsome lodgings for me, and *both his Cousins Montague to receive me in them, and to accompany me till all shall be adjusted to my mind*; and till a

(a) See the first Note on p. 332. of Vol. I.

‘ *Reconciliation shall be effected*; which he assures me nothing shall be wanting in him to facilitate; greatly as he has been insulted by all my family.

‘ These several measures he proposes to my choice; as it was unlikely, he says, that he could procure, *in the time*, a Letter from Lady Betty, under her own hand, to invite me in form to her house, unless he had been himself to go to that Lady for it; which, at this critical conjuncture, while he is attending my commands, is impossible.

‘ He conjures me, in the solemnest manner, if I would not throw him into utter despair, to keep to my appointment.

‘ However, instead of threatening my relations, or Solmes, if I recede, he respectfully says, that he doubts not, but that, if I *do*, it will be upon such reasons, as he ought to be satisfied with; upon no slighter, he hopes, than their leaving me at full liberty to pursue my own inclinations: In which (whatever they shall be) he will intirely acquiesce; only endeavouring *to make his future good behaviour the sole ground for his expectation of my favour*.

‘ In short, he solemnly vows, that his *whole* view at present, is To free me from my imprisonment; and to restore me to my own free-will, in a point so absolutely necessary to my future happiness. He declares, that neither the hopes he has of my future favour, nor the consideration of his own and family’s honour, will permit him to propose anything *that shall be inconsistent with my own most scrupulous notions*: And, for my mind’s sake, should chuse to have the proposed end obtained by my friends declining to compel me. But that nevertheless, as to the world’s opinion, it is impossible to imagine, that the behaviour of my relations to me has not already brought upon my family those free censures which they deserve, and caused the
‘ step

‘step which I am so scrupulous about taking, to be
‘no other than the *natural* and *expected* consequence
‘of their treatment of me.’

Indeed, I am afraid all this is true: And it is owing to some little degree of politeness, that Mr. Lovelace does not say all he might say on this subject: For I have no doubt, that I am the talk, and perhaps the by-word of half the county. If so, I am afraid I can now do nothing that will give me more disgrace than I have already so causlessly received by their indiscreet persecutions: And let me be whose I will, and do what I will, I shall never wipe off the stain which my confinement, and the rigorous usage I have received, have fixed upon me; at least in my own opinion.

I wish, if ever I am to be considered as one of the eminent family this man is allied to, some of them do not think the worse of me, for the disgrace I have received. In that case, perhaps, I shall be obliged to him, if *he* do not. You see how much this harsh, this cruel treatment from my own family has humbled me!--But perhaps I was too much exalted before.

Mr. Lovelace concludes, ‘with repeatedly begging an Interview with me; and That, *this* night, if possible: An honour, he says, he is the more encouraged to solicit for, as I had twice before made him hope for it. But whether he obtain it or not, he beseeches me to chuse one of the alternatives he offers to my acceptance; and not to depart from my resolution of escaping on Monday, unless the reason ceases on which I had taken it up; and that I have a prospect of being restored to the favour of my friends; at least to my own liberty, and freedom of choice.’

He renews all his vows and promises on this head in so earnest and so solemn a manner, that (his own *interest*, and his family’s *honour*, and their *favour* for

CLARISSA HARLOWE. 193

for me, co-operating) I can have no room to doubt of his sincerity.

L E T T E R XXVI.

Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, To Miss HOWE.

Sat. Morn. 8 o' Clock (April 8).

WHether you will blame me or not, I cannot tell, but I have deposited a Letter confirming my resolution to leave this house on Monday next, within the hours mentioned in my former, if possible. I have not kept a copy of it. But this is the substance :

I tell him, ' That I have no way to avoid the ' determined resolution of my friends in behalf of ' Mr. Solmes, but by abandoning this house by his ' assistance.'

I have not pretended to make a merit with him on this score ; for I plainly tell him, ' That could I, ' *without an unpardonable sin*, die when I would, I ' would sooner make death my choice, than take a ' step, which all the world, if not my own heart, ' will condemn me for taking.'

I tell him, ' That I shall not try to bring any ' other cloaths with me, than those I shall have on ; ' and those but my common wearing-apparel ; lest I ' should be suspected. That I must expect to be ' denied the possession of my Estate : But that I am ' determined never to consent to a litigation with my ' Father, were I to be reduced to ever so low a state : ' So that the protection I am to be obliged for to ' any one, must be alone for the distress-sake. That, ' therefore, he will have nothing to hope for from ' this step, *that he had not before* : And that, in ' every light, I reserve to myself to *accept or refuse ' his address, as his behaviour and circumspection shall ' appear to me to deserve.*'

I tell him, ' That I think it best to go into a private lodging, in the neighbourhood of Lady Betty Lawrance ; and not to her Ladyship's house ; that it may not appear to the world, *that I have refuged myself in his family* ; and that a Reconciliation with my friends may not, on that account, be made impracticable : That I will send for thither my faithful Hannah ; and apprise only Miss Howe where I am : That *he shall instantly leave me*, and go to London, or to one of Lord M's Seats ; and (as he had promised) not come near me, but by my leave ; contenting himself with a correspondence by Letter only.

' That if I find myself in danger of being discovered, and carried back by violence, I will then throw myself directly into the protection either of Lady Betty or Lady Sarah : But *This only in case of absolute necessity* ; for that it will be more to my reputation, for me, by the best means I can (taking advantage of my privacy) to enter by a second or third hand *into a treaty of Reconciliation with my friends*.

' That I must, however, plainly tell him, That if, in this treaty, my friends *insist upon my resolving against marrying him*, I will engage to comply with them ; provided they will allow me to promise him, *that I will never be the Wife of any other man while he remains single, or is living* : That this is a compliment I am willing to pay him, in return for the trouble and pains he has taken, and the usage he has met with, on my account : Altho' I intimate, that he may, in a great measure, thank himself (by reason of the little regard he has paid to his reputation) for the slights he has met with.'

I tell him, ' That I may, in this privacy, write to my Cousin Morden, and, if possible, interest him in my cause.

‘ I take some brief notice then of his alternatives.’

You must think, my dear, that this unhappy force upon me, and this projected flight, make it necessary for me to account to him much sooner than I should otherwise chuse to do, for every part of my conduct.

‘ It is not to be expected, I tell him, that your Mother will embroil herself, or suffer you or Mr. Hickman to be embroiled, on my account : And as to his proposal of my going to London, I am such an absolute stranger to every-body there, and have such a bad opinion of the place, that I cannot by any means think of going thither ; except I should be induced, some time hence, by the Ladies of his family to attend them.

‘ As to the meeting he is desirous of, I think it by no means proper ; especially as it is so likely that I may soon see him. But that if any-thing occurs to induce me to change my mind, as to withdrawing, I will *then take the first opportunity to see him, and give him my reasons for that change.*’

This, my dear, I the less scrupled to write, as it might qualify him to bear such a disappointment, should I give it him ; he having, besides, behaved so very unexceptionably when he surpris'd me some time ago in the lonely Woodhouse.

Finally, ‘ I commend myself, as a person in distress, and *merely as such*, to *his* honour, and to the protection of the Ladies of his family. I repeat (most cordially, I am sure !) my deep concern for being forced to take a step so disagreeable, and so derogatory to my honour. And having told him, that I will endeavour to obtain leave to dine in the Ivy Summer-house (a), and to send Betty of some errand,

(a) The Ivy Summer-house (or Ivy Bower, as it was sometimes called in the family) was a place, that from a girl, this young Lady delighted in. She used, in the summer-months, frequently

‘ errand, when there, I leave the rest to him ; but
 ‘ imagine, that about Four o’ clock will be a proper
 ‘ time for him to contrive some signal to let me know
 ‘ he is at hand, and for me to unbolt the garden-
 ‘ door.’

I added, by way of postscript, ‘ That their suspi-
 ‘ cions seeming to increase, I advise him to contrive
 ‘ to send or come to the usual place, as frequently as
 ‘ possible, in the interval of time till Monday morn-
 ‘ ing Ten or Eleven o’ clock ; as something may
 ‘ possibly happen to make me alter my mind.’

O my dear Miss Howe!—what a sad, sad thing is
 the necessity, forced upon me, for all this preparation
 and contrivance!—But it is now too late!—But how!
 —*Too late*, did I say?—What a word is *that*!—what
 a dreadful thing, *were* I to repent, to *find* it to be
 too late to remedy the apprehended evil!

Saturday, Ten o’ Clock.

MR. SOLMES is here. He is to dine with his new
 relations, as Betty tells me he already calls them.

He would have thrown himself in my way once
 more: But I hurried up to my prison, in my return
 from my garden-walk, to avoid him.

I had, when in the garden, the curiosity to see if
 my Letter were gone: I cannot say with an intention
 to take it back again if it were not, because I see not
 how I could do otherwise than I have done ; yet,
 what a caprice ! when I found it gone, I began (as

to sit and work, and read, and write, and draw, and (when
 permitted) to breakfast, and dine, and sometimes to sup, in it ;
 especially when Miss Howe, who had an equal liking to it, was
 her visiter and guest.

She describes it, in another Letter (which appears not) as
 ‘ pointing to a pretty variegated landscape of wood, water,
 ‘ and hilly country ; which had pleased her so much, that she
 ‘ had drawn it ; the piece hanging up, in her parlour, among
 ‘ some of her other drawings.’

yesterday-

yesterday-morning) to wish it had not: For no other reason, I believe, than because it was out of my power.

A strange diligence in this man!—He *says*, he almost lives upon the place; and I think so too.

He mentions, as you will see in his Letter, four several disguises, which he put on in one day. It is a wonder, nevertheless, that he has not been seen by some of our tenants: For it is impossible that any disguise can hide the gracefulness of his figure. But this is to be said, that the adjoining grounds being all in our own hands, and no common foot-paths near that part of the garden, and thro' the Park and Coppice, nothing can be more bye and unfrequented.

Then they are less watchful, I believe, over my garden-walks, and my poultry-visits, depending, as my Aunt hinted, upon the bad character they have taken so much pains to fasten upon Mr. Lovelace. This, they think (and *justly* think) must fill me with doubts. And then the regard I have hitherto had for my reputation, is another of their securities. Were it not for these two, they would not surely have used me as they have done; and at the same time left me the opportunities which I have several times had, to get away, had I been disposed to do so (*a*): And indeed their dependence on both these motives would have been well founded, had they kept but tolerable measures with me.

Then, perhaps, they have no notion of the back-door; as it is seldom opened, and leads to a place so pathless and lonesome (*b*). If not, there *can* be no other

(*a*) They might, no doubt, make a dependence upon the reasons she gives: But their chief reliance was upon the vigilance of their Joseph Leman; little imagining, what an implement he was of Mr. Lovelace.

(*b*) This, in another of her Letters (which neither is inserted), is thus described:—‘A piece of Ruins upon it, the remains of

other way to escape (if one would) unless by the flashy Lane, so full of springs, by which your servant reaches the solitary Woodhouse; to which Lane one must descend from a high bank, that bounds the poultry-yard. For, as to the front-way, you know, one must pass thro' the house to That, and in sight of the parlours, and the servants hall; and then have the open court-yard to go through, and, by means of the iron-gate, be full in view, as one passes over the Lawn, for a quarter of a mile together; the young plantations of Elms and Limes affording yet but little shade or covert.

The Ivy Summer-house is the most convenient for this heart-affecting purpose, of any spot in the garden, as it is not far from the back-door, and yet in another alley, as you may remember. Then it is seldom resorted to by any-body else, except in the summer-months, because it is cool. When they loved me, they would often, for this reason, object to my long continuance in it:—But now, it is no matter what becomes of me. Besides, *Cold is a bracer*, as my Brother said yesterday.

Here I will deposit what I have written. Let me have your prayers, my dear; and your approbation, or your censure, of the steps I have taken:

‘ an Old Chapel, now standing in the midst of the Coppice;
 ‘ here and there an overgrown Oak, surrounded with Ivy and
 ‘ Mistletoe, starting up, to sanctify, as it were, the awful solemnness of the place: A spot, too, where a man having been
 ‘ found hanging some years ago, it was used to be thought of
 ‘ by us when children, and by the maid-servants, with a degree
 ‘ of terror (it being actually the habitation of owls, ravens, and
 ‘ other ominous birds) as haunted by ghosts, goblins, spectres:
 ‘ The genuine result of Country Loneliness and Ignorance: Notions which, early propagated, are apt to leave impressions
 ‘ even upon minds grown strong enough at the same time to
 ‘ despise the like credulous follies in others.’

For

CLARISSA HARLOWE. 199

For yet it may not be quite too late to revoke the appointment. I am

Your most affectionate and faithful

CL. HARLOWE.

Why will you send your servant empty-handed?

L E T T E R XXVII.

Miss HOWE, To *Miss* CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Sat. Afternoon.

BY your last date of Ten o' clock in your Letter of this day, you could not long have deposited it before Robin took it. He rode hard, and brought it to me just as I had risen from table.

You may justly blame me for sending my messenger empty-handed, your situation considered; and yet that very situation (so critical!) is partly the reason for it: For indeed I knew not what to write, fit to send you.

I had been inquiring privately, how to procure you a conveyance from Harlowe-Place, and yet not appear in it; knowing, that to oblige in the *fact*, and to disoblige in the *manner*, is but obliging by halves: My Mother being moreover very suspicious, and very uneasy; made more so by daily visits from your Uncle Antony; who tells her, that every-thing is now upon the point of being determined; and hopes, that her Daughter will not so interfere, as to discourage your compliance with their wills. This I came at by a way that I cannot take notice of, or *both* should hear of it in a manner *neither* would like: And, *without* that, my Mother and I have had almost hourly bickerings.

I found more difficulty than I expected (as the time was confined, and secrecy required, and as you so earnestly forbid me to accompany you in your enterprise) in procuring you a vehicle. Had you not

obliged me to keep measures with my Mother, I could have managed it with ease. I could even have taken our own chariot, on one pretence or other, and put two horses extraordinary to it, if I had thought fit; and I could, when we had got to London, have sent it back, and nobody the wiser as to the lodgings we might have taken.

I wish to the Lord, you had permitted This. Indeed I think you are too punctilious a great deal for your situation. Would you expect to enjoy yourself with your usual placidness, and not be ruffled, in an hurricane which every moment threatens to blow your house down?

Had your distress sprung from yourself, that would have been another thing. But when all the world knows where to lay the fault, this alters the case.

How can you say I am happy, when my Mother, to her power, is as much an abettor of their wickedness to my dearest friend, as your Aunt, or any-body else?—And this thro' the instigation of that odd-headed and foolish Uncle of yours, who (sorry creature that he is!) keeps her up to resolutions which are unworthy of her, for an example to me, if it please you. Is not this cause enough for me to ground a resentment upon, sufficient to justify me for accompanying you; the friendship between us so well known?

Indeed, my dear, the importance of the case considered, I must repeat, That you are too nice. Don't they already think, that your non-compliance with their odious measures is owing a good deal to my advice? Have they not prohibited our correspondence upon that very surmise? And have I, but on *your* account, reason to value *what* they think?

Besides, what discredit have I to fear by such a step? What detriment? Would Hickman, do you believe, refuse me upon it?—If he did, should I be
sorry

sorry for that?—Who is it, that has a Soul, who would not be affected by such an instance of female friendship?

But I should vex and disorder my Mother!—Well, that is something: But not more than she vexes and disorders me, on her being made an implement by such a sorry creature, who ambles hither every day in spite to my dearest friend.—Woe be to *both*, if it be for a *double end*!—Chide me, if you will: I don't care.

I say, and I insist upon it, such a step would *ennoble* your friend: And if still you will permit it, I will take the office out of Lovelace's hands; and, to-morrow evening, or on Monday before his time of appointment takes place, will come in a chariot, or chaise: And then, my dear, if we get off as I wish, will we make terms (and what terms we please) with them All. My Mother will be glad to receive her daughter again I warrant: And Hickman will cry for *joy* on my return; or he shall for *sorrow*.

But you are so very earnestly angry with me for proposing such a step, and have always so much to say for your side of *any* question, that I am afraid to urge it farther.—Only be so good (let me add) as to encourage me to resume it, if, upon farther consideration, and upon weighing matters well (and in *this* light, Whether best to go off with *me*, or with *Lovelace*) you can get over your punctilious regard for my reputation. A woman going away with a *woman* is not so discreditable a thing, surely! and with no view, but to *avoid the fellows*!—I say, only be so good as to *consider* this point; and if you *can* get over your scruples on *my* account, do. And so I will have done with this argument for the present; and apply myself to some of the passages in yours.

A time, I hope, will come, that I shall be able to read your affecting narratives without that impatient bitterness,

bitterness, which now boils over in my heart, and would flow to my pen, were I to enter into the particulars of what you write. And indeed I am afraid of giving you my advice at all, or of telling you what I should do in your case (supposing you will still refuse my offer; finding too, what you have been brought or rather driven to, without it); lest any evil should follow it: In which case, I should never forgive myself. And this consideration has added to my difficulties in writing to you now you are upon such a crisis, and yet refuse the *only* method—But I said, I would not for the present touch any more that string. Yet, one word more, chide me if you please: If any harm betide you, I shall for ever blame my Mother—Indeed I shall—And perhaps yourself, if you do not accept of my offer.

But one thing, in your present situation and prospects, let me advise: It is this, That if you *do* go off with Mr. Lovelace, you take the first opportunity to marry. Why should you *not*, when everybody will know by *whose* assistance, and in *whose* company, you leave your Father's house, go whithersoever you will?—You may indeed keep him at distance, until Settlements are drawn, and such-like matters are adjusted to your mind: But even these are matters of less consideration in your particular case, than they would be in that of most others: and first, *Because*, be his other faults what they will, nobody thinks him an ungenerous man: next, *Because* the possession of your Estate must be given up to you as soon as your Cousin Morden comes; who, as your Trustee, will see it done; and done upon proper terms: 3dly, *Because* there is no want of fortune on his side: 4thly, *Because* all his family value you, and are extremely desirous that you should be their Relation: 5thly, *Because* he makes no scruple of accepting you without conditions. You see

see how he has always defied your relations (I, for my own part, can forgive him for that fault : Nor know I, if it be not a noble one) : And I dare say, he had rather call you *his*, without a shilling, than be under obligation to those whom he has full as little reason to love, as they have to love him. You have heard, that his own Relations cannot make his proud spirit submit to owe any favour to them.

For all these reasons, I think, you may the less stand upon previous Settlements. It is therefore my absolute opinion, that, if you *do* withdraw with him (And in that case you must let *him* be judge, when he can leave you with safety, *you'll observe That*) you should not postpone the Ceremony.

Give this matter your most serious consideration. Punctilio is out of doors the moment you are out of your Father's house. I know how justly severe you have been upon those inexcusable creatures whose giddiness, and even want of decency, have made them, in the *same hour* as I may say, leap from a Parent's window to a Husband's bed—But, considering Lovelace's character, I repeat my opinion, that your *Reputation* in the eye of the world requires that no delay be made in *this* point when once you are in his power.

I need not, I am sure, make a stronger plea to *you*.

You say, in excuse for my Mother (what my fervent Love for my Friend very ill brooks) That we ought not to blame any-one for not doing what she has an option to do, or to let alone. This, in cases of friendship, would admit of very strict discussion. If the thing requested be of *greater* consequence, or even of *equal*, to the person sought to, and it were, as the old phrase has it, *to take a thorn out of one's friend's foot, to put it into one's own*, something might be said.—Nay, it would be, I will venture to say,

say, a selfish thing in us to ask a favour of a friend which would subject That friend to the *same* or *equal* inconvenience as That from which we wanted to be relieved. The requester would, in this case, teach his friend, by his *own* selfish example, with much *better* reason, to deny him, and despise a friendship so *merely* nominal. But if, by a *less* inconvenience to ourselves, we could relieve our friend from a *greater*, the refusal of such a favour makes the refuser unworthy of the name of Friend: Nor would I admit such a one, not even into the *Outermost* Fold of my Heart.

I am well aware that this is your opinion of friendship, as well as mine: For I owe the distinction to you, upon a certain occasion; and it saved me from a very great inconvenience, as you must needs remember. But you were always for making excuses for *other* people, in cases wherein you would not have allowed of one for *yourself*.

I must own, that were these excuses for a friend's indifference, or denial, made by any-body but *you*, in a case of such *vast* importance to herself, and of so comparative a *small* one to those whose protection she would be thought to wish for; I, who am for ever, as you have often remarked, endeavouring to trace effects to their causes, should be ready to suspect, that there was a latent, unowned inclination, which balancing, or *preponderating* rather, made the issue of the alternative (however important) sit more lightly upon the excuser's mind than she cared to own.

You will understand me, my dear. But if you do not, it may be as well for me; for I am afraid I shall *have it* from you, for but starting such a notion, or giving a hint, which perhaps, as you did once in another case, you will reprimandingly call, 'Not being able to forego the ostentation of sagacity,

‘city, tho’ at the expence of that tenderness which is
‘due to friendship and charity.’

What signifies owning a fault, without mending it, you’ll say?—Very true, my dear. But you know I ever was a saucy creature—Ever stood in need of great allowances.—And I remember likewise that I ever had them from my dear Clarissa. Nor do I doubt them now: For you know how much I love you—If it be possible, *more* than *myself* I love you! Believe me, my dear: And, in consequence of that belief, you will be able to judge, how much I am affected by your present distressful and critical situation; which will not suffer me to pass by without a censure even that *philosophy* of temper in your own cause, which you have not in another’s, and which all that know you ever admired you for.

From this critical and distressful situation, it shall be my hourly prayers, that you may be delivered without blemish to that fair fame, which has hitherto, like your heart, been unspotted.

With this prayer, twenty times repeated, concludes

Your ever-affectionate

ANNA HOWE.

I hurried myself in writing This; and I hurry Robin away with it, that in a situation so very critical, you may have all the time possible to consider what I have written, upon two points so very important. I will repeat them in a very few words:

‘Whether you chuse not rather to go off with
‘one of *your own Sex*; with your ANNA
‘HOWE—than with one of the *other*; with
‘Mr. LOVELACE?’

And if *not*,

‘Whether you should not marry him as soon as
‘possible?’

LET-

L E T T E R XXVIII.

Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, *To Miss* HOWE.[*The preceding Letter not received.*]*Saturday Afternoon.*

Already have I an ecstatic Answer, as I may call it, to my Letter.

‘ He promises compliance with my will in every
 ‘ article : Approves of all I propose ; particularly of
 ‘ the private lodging : And thinks it a happy expedient to obviate the censures of the Busy and the
 ‘ Unreflecting : And yet he hopes, that the putting
 ‘ myself into the protection of either of his Aunts
 ‘ (treated as I am treated) would be far from being
 ‘ looked upon by any-body in a disreputable light.
 ‘ But every thing I injoin or resolve upon must, he
 ‘ says, be right, not only with respect to my present
 ‘ but future Reputation ; with regard to which, he
 ‘ hopes so to behave himself, as to be *allowed* to be,
 ‘ next to myself, more *properly* solicitous than any-
 ‘ body. He will only assure me, that his whole family are extremely desirous to take advantage of
 ‘ the persecutions I labour under, to make their
 ‘ court and endear themselves to me, by their best
 ‘ and most chearful services : Happy, if they can
 ‘ in any measure contribute to my present freedom
 ‘ and future happiness.

‘ He will this afternoon, he says, write to Lord M.
 ‘ and to Lady Betty and Lady Sarah, that he is now
 ‘ within view of being the happiest man in the world,
 ‘ if it be not his own fault ; since the only woman
 ‘ upon earth that can make him so, will be soon out
 ‘ of danger of being another man’s ; and cannot
 ‘ possibly prescribe any terms to him that he shall
 ‘ not think it his duty to comply with.

‘ He flatters himself now (my last Letter *confirm-*
 ‘ *ing*

‘ing my resolution) that he can be in no apprehension of my changing my mind, unless my friends change their manner of acting by me; which he is too sure they will not (a). And now will all his Relations, who take such a kind and generous share in his interests, glory and pride themselves in the prospects he has before him.’

Thus artfully does he hold me to it.

‘As to fortune, he begs of me not to be solicitous on that score: That his own Estate is sufficient for us both; not a *nominal*, but a *real*, two thousand pounds *per annum*, equivalent to some Estates reputed a third more: That it never was incumbred: That he is clear of the world, both as to book and bond-debts; thanks, perhaps, to his *pride*, more than to his *virtue*. That Lord M. moreover resolves to settle upon him a thousand pounds *per annum* on his nuptials. And to this, he will have it, his Lordship is instigated more by motives of *justice*, than of *generosity*; as he must consider it was but an equivalent for an Estate which he had got possession of, to which *his* (Mr. Lovelace’s) Mother had better pretensions. That his Lordship also proposed to give him up either his Seat in Hertfordshire, or that in Lancashire, at his own or at his Wife’s option, especially if I am the person. All which it will be in my power to see done, and proper Settlements drawn, *before* I enter into any farther engagements with him; if I will have it so.’

He says, ‘That I need not be under any solicitude as to *apparel*: All *immediate* occasions of That sort will be most chearfully supplied by the Ladies

(a) Well he might be so sure, when he had the art to play them off, by his corrupted agent, and to make them all join to promote his views unknown to themselves; as is shewn in several of his preceding Letters.

‘ of his family : As my others shall, with the greatest
 ‘ pride and pleasure (if I will allow him that honour)
 ‘ by himself.

‘ He assures me, That I shall govern him as I
 ‘ please, with regard to any-thing in *his* power to-
 ‘ wards effecting a Reconciliation with my friends :’
 A point he knows my heart is set upon.

‘ He is afraid, that the time will hardly allow of
 ‘ his procuring Miss Charlotte Montague’s attend-
 ‘ ance upon me, at St. Albans, as he had proposed
 ‘ she should ; because, he understands, she keeps
 ‘ her chamber with a violent cold and sore throat.
 ‘ But both she and her Sister, the first moment she
 ‘ is able to go abroad, shall visit me at my private
 ‘ lodgings ; and introduce me to Lady Sarah and
 ‘ Lady Betty, or those Ladies to me, as I shall chuse ;
 ‘ and accompany me to town, if I please ; and stay
 ‘ as long in it with me, as I shall think fit to stay
 ‘ there.

‘ Lord M. will also, at my own time, and in my
 ‘ own *manner* (that is to say, either publicly or
 ‘ privately) make me a visit. And, for his own
 ‘ part, when he has seen me in safety, either in their
 ‘ protection, or in the privacy I prefer, he will leave
 ‘ me, and not attempt to visit me but by my own
 ‘ permission.

‘ He had thoughts once, he says, on hearing of
 ‘ his Cousin Charlotte’s indisposition, to have en-
 ‘ gaged his Cousin Patty’s attendance upon me,
 ‘ either at or about the neighbouring village, or at
 ‘ St. Albans : But, he says, she is a low-spirited,
 ‘ timorous girl, and would but the more have per-
 ‘ plexed us.’

So, my dear, the enterprize requires courage and
 high spirits, you see !—And indeed it does !—What
 am I about to do !—

He himself, it is plain, thinks it necessary that I
 should

should be accompanied with one of my own Sex.—He might, at least, have proposed the woman of one of the Ladies of his family.—Lord bless me!—What am I about to do!—



AFTER all, far as I have gone, I know not but I may still recede: And if I do, a mortal quarrel I suppose will ensue.—And what if it does?—Could there be any way to escape this Solmes, a breach with Lovelace might make way for the Single Life to take place, which I so much prefer: And then I would defy the Sex. For I see nothing but trouble and vexation that they bring upon ours: And when once entered, one is obliged to go on with them, treading, with tender feet, upon thorns, and sharper thorns, to the end of a painful journey.

What to do I know not. The more I think, the more I am embarrassed!—And the stronger will be my doubts as the appointed time draws near.

But I will go down, and take a little turn in the garden; and deposit This, and his Letters all but the two last, which I will inclose in my next, if I have opportunity to write another.

Mean time, my dear friend——But what can I desire you to pray for?—Adieu then!—Let me only say—Adieu!—

L E T T E R XXIX.

Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, To Miss HOWE.

[In answer to Letter XXVII.]

Sunday Morning, April 9.

DO not think, my beloved friend, altho' you have given me in yours of yesterday a *severer* instance of what, nevertheless, I must call your *impartial* Love, than ever yet I received from you, that I will be displeased with you for it. That would

be to put myself into the inconvenient situation of Royalty : That is to say, *Out of the way* of ever being told of my faults ; of ever mending them ; and *In the way* of making the sincerest and warmest friendship useless to me.

And then how brightly, how nobly glows in your bosom the sacred flame of friendship ; since it can make you ready to impute to the unhappy sufferer a *less degree* of warmth in *her own* cause, than you have for her, because she endeavours to divest herself of *Self* so far as to leave others to the option which they have a right to make !—Ought I, my dear, to blame, ought I not rather to admire you for this ardor ?

But nevertheless, lest you should think that there is any foundation for a surmise which (altho' it owe its rise to *your* friendship) would, if there *were*, leave *me* utterly inexcusable ; I must, in justice to myself, declare, That I know not my own heart, if I have any of that *latent* or *un-owned inclination*, which you would impute to *any other but me*. Nor does the *important alternative* sit lightly on my mind. And yet I must excuse your Mother, were it but on this single consideration, That I could not presume to reckon upon *her* favour, as I could upon *her Daughter's*, so as to make the claim of friendship upon *her*, to whom, as the Mother of my dearest friend, a veneration is owing, which can hardly be compatible with that sweet familiarity which is one of the indispensable requisites of the Sacred Tie by which your heart and mine are bound in one.

What therefore I might expect from my *Anna Howe*, I *ought not* from her *Mother* ; for would it not be very strange, that a person of her experience should be reflected upon because she gave not up her own judgment, where the consequence of her doing so would be to embroil herself, as she apprehends,
with

with a family she has lived well with, and in behalf of a child against her parents?—As she has moreover a Daughter of her own:—A Daughter too, give me leave to say, of whose vivacity and charming spirits she is more apprehensive than she need to be, because her truly maternal cares make her fear more from her *youth*, than she hopes from her *prudence*; which nevertheless she and all the world know to be *beyond* her years.

And here let me add, That whatever you may generously, and as the result of an ardent affection for your unhappy friend, urge on this head, in my behalf, or harshly against any one who may refuse me protection in the extraordinary circumstances I find myself in; I have some pleasure, in being able to curb undue expectations upon my indulgent friends, whatever were to befall myself from those circumstances; for I should be extremely mortified, were I by my selfish forwardness to give occasion for such a check, as to be told, that I had encouraged an unreasonable hope; or, according to the phrase you mention, wished to take a *Thorn out of my own foot, and to put it into that of my friend*. Nor should I be better pleased with myself, if, having been taught by my good Mrs. Norton, that the best of schools is *That of affliction*, I should rather learn impatience than the contrary, by the lessons I am obliged to get by heart in it; and if I should judge of the *merits of others*, as they were *kind to me*; and that at the expence of their own convenience or peace of mind. For is not This to suppose myself ever in the right; and all who do not act as I would have them act, perpetually in the wrong? In short, to make *my* sake, *God's* sake, in the sense of Mr. Solmes's pitiful plea to me.

How often, my dear, have You and I endeavoured to detect and censure this partial spirit in others?

But I know you do not always content yourself with saying what you think may *justly* be said; but,

in order to shew the extent of a penetration which can go to the bottom of any subject, delight to say or to write all that *can* be said or *written*, or even *thought*, on the particular occasion; and this partly perhaps from being desirous [Pardon me, my dear!] to be thought mistress of a sagacity that is beforehand with events. But who would wish to drain off or dry up a refreshing current, because it now-and-then puts us to some little inconvenience by its overflowings? In other words, who would not allow for the liveliness of a spirit which for one painful sensibility gives an hundred pleasurable ones? And the *one* in consequence of the *other*?

But now I come to the two points in your Letter, which most sensibly concern me: Thus you put them:

- ‘ Whether I chuse not rather to go off [shocking words!] with one of my *own Sex*; with my
- ‘ ANNA HOWE—than with one of the *other*;
- ‘ with Mr. LOVELACE?’

And if *not*,

- ‘ Whether I should not marry him as soon as
- ‘ possible?’

You know, my dear, my reasons for rejecting your proposal, and even for being earnest that you should not be *known* to be assisting to me in an enterprize in which a cruel necessity induced *me* to think of engaging; and for which *you* have not the same plea. At this rate, *well* might your Mother be uneasy at our correspondence, not knowing to what inconveniencies it might subject her and you!—If *I* am hardly excusable to think of withdrawing from my *unkind* friends, what could *you* have to say for yourself, were you to abandon a Mother so *indulgent*? Does she suspect that your fervent friendship may lead you to a *small* indiscretion? and does this suspicion offend you? And would

would you, in resentment, shew her and the world, that you can voluntarily rush into the *biggest error* that any of our Sex can be guilty of?

And is it worthy of your generosity [I ask you, my dear, is it?] to think of taking so undutiful a step, because you believe your Mother would be glad to receive you again?

I do assure you, that were I to take this step myself, I would run all *risques* rather than you should accompany me in it. Have I, do you think, a desire to *double* and *treble* my own fault in the eye of the world? In the eye of that world, which, cruelly as I am used (not knowing all) would not acquit *me*?

But, my dearest kindest friend, let me tell you, That we will *neither* of us take such a step. The manner of putting your questions abundantly convinces me, that I ought not, in *your* opinion, to *attempt* it. You no doubt *intend* that I shall *so* take it; and I thank you for the equally polite and forcible conviction.

It is some satisfaction to me (taking the matter in this light) that I had begun to waver before I received your last. And now I tell you, that it has absolutely determined me *not* to go off; at least, not to-morrow.

If *You*, my dear, think the *issue of the alternative* (to use your own words) *sits so lightly upon my mind*; in short, that my *inclination* is *faulty*; the *World* would treat me much less scrupulously. When therefore you represent, *that all punctilio must be at an end the moment I am out of my Father's house*; and hint, that I must submit it to Mr. Lovelace to judge *when* he can leave me with safety; that is to say, give *him* the option whether he will leave me, or not; Who can bear these reflections, who can resolve to incur these inconveniencies, that has the question still in her own power to decide upon?

While I thought only of an escape from *This house* as an escape from Mr. *Solmes*; that already my reputa-

tion suffered by my confinement; and that it would be still in my own option, either to marry Mr. Lovelace, or wholly to renounce him; bold as the step was, I thought, treated as I am treated, something was to be said in excuse of it—If not to the world, to *myself*: And to be *self-acquitted*, is a blessing to be preferred to the opinion of all the world. But, after I have censured most severely, as I have ever done, those giddy girls, who have in the same hour, as I may say, that they have fled from their chamber, presented themselves at the Altar that is to witness to their undutiful rashness; after I have stipulated with Mr. Lovelace *for time*, and for an *ultimate option whether to accept or refuse him*; and for his *leaving me, as soon as I am in a place of safety* (which, as you observe, *he* must be the judge of); and after he has *signified to me his compliance with these terms*; so that I cannot, if I *would*, recall them, and suddenly marry;—You see, my dear, that I have nothing left me, but to resolve *not* to go away with him.

But, how, on this revocation of my appointment, shall I be able to pacify him?

How!—Why assert the privilege of my Sex!—Surely, on *This* side of the Solemnity he has no *right* to be displeased. Besides, did I not reserve a power of receding, if I saw fit? To what purpose, as I asked in the case between your Mother and you, has anybody an option, if the making use of it shall give the refused a right to be disgusted?

Far, very far, would *Those*, who, according to the Old Law, have a *right* of *absolving* or *confirming* a child's promise, be from ratifying *mine*, had it been ever *so solemn* a one (a). But This was rather an *ap-
pointment*

(a) See *Numb. xxx.* Where it is declared, whose vows shall be binding, and whose not. The vows of a Man, or of a Widow, are there pronounced to be indispensable; because they are Sole, and subject

pointment than a promise : And suppose it had been the latter ; and that I had *not* reserved to myself a liberty of revoking it ; was it to preclude *better* or *maturer* consideration ?—If so, how unfit to be given !—How ungenerous to be insisted upon !—And how unsuited still, to be kept !—Is there a man living who ought to be angry that a woman whom he hopes one day to call his, shall refuse to keep a rash promise, when, on the maturest deliberation, she is convinced that it *was* a rash one ?

I resolve then, upon the whole, to stand This one trial of Wednesday next—or, perhaps, I should rather say, of Tuesday evening, if my Father hold his purpose of endeavouring, in person, to make me *read*, or *bear read*, and then *sign*, the Settlements.—*That, That* must be the greatest trial of all.

If I am compelled to sign them over-night—Then

subject to no other domestic authority. But the vows of a Single woman, and of a Wife, if the Father of the one, or the Husband of the other, disallow of them as soon as they know them, are to be of no force.

A matter highly necessary to be known ; by all young Ladies especially, whose designing addressers too often endeavour to engage them by vows ; and then plead Conscience and Honour to them to hold them down to the performance.

It cannot be amiss to recite the very words.

Ver. 3. *If a woman vow a vow unto the Lord, and bind herself by a bond, being in her Father's house in her youth ;*

4. *And her Father hear her vow, and her bond wherewith she hath bound her soul, and her Father shall hold his peace at her ; then all her vows shall stand, and every bond wherewith she hath bound her soul shall stand.*

5. *But if her Father disallow her in the day that he heareth ; not any of her vows or of her bonds wherewith she hath bound her soul shall stand : And the Lord shall forgive her, because her Father disallowed her.*

The same in the case of a Wife, as said above. See ver. 6, 7, 8, &c.—And all is thus solemnly closed :

Ver. 16. *These are the Statutes which the Lord commanded Moses between a Man and his Wife, between the Father and his Daughter, being yet in her youth, in her Father's house.*

(the Lord bless me!) must All I dread, follow, as of course, on Wednesday. If I can prevail upon them by my prayers (perhaps I shall fall into fits; for the very first appearance of my Father, after having been so long banished his presence, will greatly affect me—If, I say, I can prevail upon them by my prayers) to lay aside their views; or to suspend the Day, if but for one week; if *not*, but for two or three days; still Wednesday will be a lighter day of trial. They will surely give me time to *consider*; to *argue* with myself. This will not be *promising*. As I have made no effort to get away, they have no reason to suspect me; so I may have an opportunity, in the last resort, to withdraw. Mrs. Norton is to be with me: She, altho' she should be chidden for it, will, in my extremity, plead for me. My Aunt Hervey *may*, in such an extremity, join with her. Perhaps my Mother may be brought over. I will kneel to each, one by one, to make a friend. Some of them have been afraid to see me, lest they should be moved in my favour: Does not This give me a reasonable hope, that I *may* move them? My Brother's counsel, heretofore given, to turn me out of doors to my evil destiny, may again be repeated, and may prevail: *Then* shall I be in no *worse* case than *now*, as to the displeasure of my friends; and thus far *better*, that it will not be my fault that I seek another protection: Which even *then* ought to be my Cousin Morden's, rather than Mr. Lovelace's, or any other person's.

My heart, in short, misgives me less, when I resolve *This* way, than when I think of the *other*: And in so strong and involuntary a byass, the *heart* is, as I may say, *Conscience*. And well cautions the wise man: 'Let the counsel of thine own heart stand; 'for there is no man more faithful to thee, than It; 'For a man's mind is sometimes wont to tell him
' more

‘more than seven watchmen, that sit above in a high tower (a).’

Forgive these indigested self-reasonings. I will close here: And instantly set about a Letter of Revocation to Mr. Lovelace; take it as he will. It will only be another trial of temper to *him*. To *me* of infinite importance. And has he not promised temper and acquiescence, on the supposition of a change in my mind?

LETTER XXX.

Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, To Miss HOWE.

Sunday Morning (April 9.).

NOBODY it seems will go to church this day. No blessing to be expected perhaps upon views so worldly, and in some so cruel.

They have a mistrust that I have some device in my head. Betty has been looking among my cloaths. I found her, on coming up from depositing my Letter to Lovelace (for I *have* written!) peering among them; for I had left the key in the lock. She coloured, and was confounded to be caught. But I only said, I should be accustomed to *any* sort of treatment in time. If she had her orders—those were enough for her.

She owned, in her confusion, that a motion had been made to abridge me of my Airings; and the report *she* should make, would be of no disadvantage to me. One of my friends, she told me, urged in my behalf, That there was no need of laying me under greater restraint, since Mr. Lovelace’s threatening to *rescue* me by violence, were I to have been carried to my Uncle’s, was a conviction that I had no design to go to him voluntarily; and that if I *bad*, I should have made preparations of that kind *before now*; and,

(a) *Eccclus.* xxxvii. 13, 14.

most probably, been detected in them.—*Hence*, it was also inferred, that there was no room to doubt, but I would at last comply. And, added the bold creature, if you don't intend to do so, your conduct, Miss, seems strange to me.—Only thus she reconciled it; That I had gone so far, I knew not how to come off *genteelly*: And she fancied I should, in *full congregation*, on Wednesday, give Mr. Solmes my hand. And then said the confident wench, as the learned Dr. Brand took his text last Sunday, *There will be joy in heaven*—

This is the substance of my Letter to Mr. Lovelace:

‘That I have reasons of the greatest consequence
 ‘to *myself* (and which, when known, must satisfy
 ‘*him*) to suspend, for the present, my intention of
 ‘leaving my Father’s house: That I have hopes
 ‘that matters may be brought to an happy conclusion,
 ‘without taking a step, which nothing but the
 ‘last necessity could justify: And that he may depend
 ‘upon my promise, that I will die, rather than consent
 ‘to marry Mr. Solmes.’

And so, I am preparing myself to stand the shock of his exclamatory reply. But be that what it will, it cannot affect me so much, as the apprehensions of what may happen to me next Tuesday or Wednesday; for now those apprehensions engage my whole attention, and make me sick at the very heart.

Sunday, Four in the Afternoon.

My Letter is not yet taken away—If he should not send for it, or take it, and come hither on my not meeting him to-morrow, in doubt of what may have befallen me, what shall I do! Why had I any concerns with this Sex!—I, that was so happy till I knew This man!

I dined in the Ivy Summer-house. My request to do so, was complied with at the first word. To shew
 I

I meant nothing, I went again into the house with Betty, as soon as I had dined. I thought it was not amiss to ask this liberty ; the weather seeming to be set in fine. Who knows what Tuesday or Wednesday may produce ?

Sunday Evening, Seven o' Clock.

THERE remains my Letter still !—He is busied, I suppose, in his preparations for to-morrow. But then he has servants. Does the man think he is so *secure* of me, that having appointed, he need not give himself any further concern about me, till the very moment ? He knows how I am beset. He knows not what may happen. I *might* be ill, or still more closely watched or confined than before. The correspondence *might* be discovered. It *might* be necessary to vary the scheme. I *might* be forced into measures, which might intirely frustrate my purpose. I *might* have new doubts. I *might* suggest something more convenient, for any-thing he knew. What can the man mean, I wonder !—Yet it shall lie ; for if he has it any time before the appointed hour, it will save me declaring to him personally my changed purpose, and the trouble of contending with him on that score. If he send for it at all, he will see by the date, that he might have had it in time ; and if he be put to any inconvenience from shortness of notice, let him take it for his pains.

Sunday Night, Nine o' Clock.

It is determined, it seems, to send to Mrs. Norton to be here on Tuesday to dinner ; and she is to stay with me for a whole week.

So she is first to endeavour to persuade me to comply ; and, when the violence is done, she is to comfort me, and try to reconcile me to my fate. They expect *fits* and *fetches*, Betty insolently tells me, and expostulations, and exclamations, *without number* :
But

But every body will be prepared for them : And when it's over, it's over; and I shall be easy and pacified when I find I can't help it.

Monday Morn. April 10. Seven o' Clock.

O my dear! There yet lies the Letter, just as I left it!

Does he think he is so sure of me?—Perhaps he imagines that I *dare not* alter my purpose. I wish I had never known him! I begin now to see this rashness in the light every one else would have seen it in, had I been guilty of it. But what can I do, if he come to-day at the appointed time! If he receive not the Letter, I must see him, or he will think something has befallen me; and certainly will come to the house. As certainly he will be insulted. And what, in that case, may be the consequence! Then I as good as promised that I would take the first opportunity to see him, if I changed my mind, and to give him my reasons for it. I have no doubt but he will be out of humour upon it: But better, if we meet, that *he* go away dissatisfied with *me*, than that I should go away dissatisfied with *myself*.

Yet, short as the time is, he may still perhaps send, and get the Letter. Something may have happened to prevent him, which when known will excuse him.

After I have disappointed him more than once before, on a requested *interview* only, it is impossible he should not have *curiosity* at least, to know if something has not happened; and whether my mind hold or not in this more *important case*. And yet, as I rashly confirmed my resolution by a second Letter, I begin now to doubt it.

Nine o' Clock.

My Cousin Dolly Hervey slid the inclosed Letter into my hand, as I passed by her, coming out of the garden.

Dearest

Dearest Madam,

I Have got intelligence from one who pretends to know every-thing, that you must be married on Wednesday morning to Mr. Solmes. Perhaps however, she says this only to vex me; for it is that saucy creature Betty Barnes. A Licence is got, as she says: And so far she went as to tell me (bidding me say nothing; but she knew I would) that Mr. Brand is to marry you. For Dr. Lewen, I hear, refuses, unless your consent can be obtained; and they have heard that he does not approve of their proceedings against you. Mr. Brand, I am told, is to have his fortune made by Uncle Harlowe and among them.

You will know better than I what to make of all these matters; for sometimes I think Betty tells me things as if I should not tell you, and yet expects that I will (*a*). For there is great whispering between Miss Harlowe and her; and I have observed that when their whispering is over, Betty comes and tells me something by way of secret. She and all the world knows how much I love you: And so I would *have* them. It is an honour to me to love a young Lady who is and ever was an honour to all her family, let them say what they will.

But from a more certain authority than Betty's I can assure you (but I must beg of you to burn this Letter) that you are to be searched once more for Letters, and for Pen and Ink; for they know you write. Something they pretend to have come at from one of Mr. Lovelace's servants, which they hope to make something of. I know not for certain what it is. He must be a very vile and wicked man, who

• (*a*) It is easy for such of the Readers as have been attentive to Mr. Lovelace's manner of working, to suppose, from this hint of Miss Hervey's, that he had instructed his double-fac'd agent to put his sweetheart Betty upon alarming Miss Hervey, in hopes she would alarm her beloved Cousin (as we see she does) in order to keep her steady to her appointment with him.

would

would boast of a Lady's favour to him, and reveal Secrets. But Mr. Lovelace, I dare say, is too much of a gentleman to be guilty of such ingratitude.

Then they have a notion, from that false Betty I believe, that you intend to take something to make yourself sick; and so they will search for phials and powders, and such-like.

If nothing shall be found that will increase their suspicions, you are to be used more kindly by your Papa when you appear before them all, than he of late has used you.

Yet, sick or well, alas! my dear Cousin! you must be married. But your Husband is to go home every night without you, till you are reconciled to him. And so illness can be no pretence to save you.

They are sure you will make a good Wife. So would not I, unless I liked my Husband. And Mr. Solmes is always telling them how he will purchase your Love by rich presents.—A sycophant man!—I wish he and Betty Barnes were to come together; and he would beat her every day.

After what I have told you, I need not advise you to secure every-thing you would not have seen.

Once more let me beg that you will burn this Letter: And, pray, dearest Madam, do not take any-thing that may prejudice your health: For that will not do. I am

Your truly loving Cousin,

D. H.

When I first read my Cousin's Letter, I was half inclined to resume my former intention; especially as my countermanding Letter was not taken away; and as my heart ached at the thoughts of the conflict I must expect to have with him on my refusal. For, see him for a few moments I doubt I must, lest he should take some rash resolutions; especially, as he has reason to expect I will see him. But here your words,

That

That all punctilio is at an end, the moment I am out of my Father's house, added to the still more cogent considerations of Duty and Reputation, determined me once more against taking the rash step. And it will be very hard (altho' no reasonable fainting, or wished-for fit, should stand my friend) if I cannot gain one month, or fortnight, or week. And I have still more hopes that I shall prevail for some delay, from my Cousin's intimation that the good Dr. Lewen refuses to give his assistance to their projects, if they have not my consent, and thinks me cruelly used: Since, without taking notice that I am apprised of this, I can plead a Scruple of Conscience, and insist upon having that worthy Divine's opinion upon it: In which, enforced as I shall enforce it, my Mother will surely second me: My Aunt Hervey, and my Mrs. Norton, will support *her*: The suspension must follow: And I can but get away afterwards.

But, if they *will* compel me: If they *will* give me no time: If no-body *will* be moved: If it be resolved that the Ceremony shall be read over my constrained hand—Why then—Alas! What then!—I can but—But what? O my dear! This Solmes shall never have my vows I am resolved! And I will say nothing but No, as long as I shall be able to speak. And who will presume to look upon such an act of violence as a Marriage?—It is impossible, surely, that a Father and Mother can see such a dreadful compulsion offered to their child—But if mine should withdraw, and leave the task to my Brother and Sister, they will have no mercy.

I am grieved to be driven to have recourse to the following artifices.

I have given them a clue, by the Feather of a Pen sticking out, where they will find such of my hidden Stores, as I intend they shall find.

Two or three little essays I have left easy to be seen, of my own writing.

About a dozen lines also of a Letter begun to you, in which I express my hopes (altho' I say, that appearances are against me) that my friends will relent. They know from your Mother, by my Uncle Antony, that, some how or other, I now-and-then get a Letter to you. In this piece of a Letter, I declare renewedly my firm resolution to give up the man so obnoxious to my family, on their releasing me from the address of the other.

Near the essays, I have left a Copy of my Letter to Lady Drayton (*a*); which, affording arguments suitable to my case; may chance (thus accidentally to be fallen upon) to incline them to favour me.

I have reserves of pens and ink, you may believe; and one or two in the Ivy Summer-house; with which I shall amuse myself in order to lighten, if possible, those apprehensions which more and more affect me as Wednesday, the day of trial, approaches.

L E T T E R XXXI.

Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, To Miss HOWE.

Ivy Summer-house, Eleven o'Clock.

HE has not yet got my Letter: And while I was contriving here how to send my officious gaolers from me, that I might have time for the intended Interview, and had hit upon an expedient, which I believe would have done, came my Aunt, and furnished me with a much better. She saw my little table covered, preparative to my solitary dinner; and hoped, she told me, that this would be the last day that my friends would be deprived of my company at table.

You may believe, my dear, that the thoughts of meeting Mr. Lovelace, for fear of being discovered, together with the contents of my Cousin Dolly's Letter, gave me great and visible emotions. She

(*a*) See Vol. I. Letter lviii. p. 387, 388.

took

took notice of them—Why these sighs, why these heavings here? said she, patting my neck—O my dear Niece, who would have thought so much natural sweetness could be so very unperfuadable?

I could not answer her, and she proceeded—I am come, I doubt, upon a very unwelcome errand. Some things that have been told us yesterday, which came from the mouth of one of the most desperate and insolent men in the world, convince your Father, and all of us, that you still find means to write out of the house. Mr. Lovelace knows every thing that is done here; and that as soon as done; and great mischief is apprehended from him, which you are as much concerned as any-body, to prevent. Your Mother has also some apprehensions concerning yourself, which yet she hopes are groundless; but, however, cannot be easy, nor will be permitted to be easy, if she would, unless (while you remain here in the Garden, or in this Summer-house) you give her the opportunity once more of looking into your closet, your cabinet, and drawers. It will be the better taken, if you give me cheerfully your keys. I hope, my dear, you won't dispute it. Your desire of dining in this place was the more readily complied with for the sake of such an opportunity.

I thought myself very lucky to be so well prepared by my Cousin Dolly's means for this search: But yet I artfully made some scruples, and not a few complaints of this treatment: After which, I not only gave her the keys of all, but even officiously emptied my pockets before her, and invited her to put her fingers in my stays, that she might be sure I had no papers there.

This highly obliged her; and she said, She would represent my cheerful compliance as it deserved, *let my Brother and Sister say what they would.* My Mother in particular, she was sure, would rejoice at the

opportunity given her to obviate, as she doubted not would be the case, some suspicions that were raised against me.

She then hinted, That there were methods taken to come at all Mr. Lovelace's secrets, and even, from his careless communicativeness, at some of *mine*; it being, she said, his custom, boastfully to prate to his very servants of his intentions, in particular cases. She added, that, deep as he was thought to be, my Brother was as deep as he; and fairly too hard for him at his own weapons—as one day it would be found.

I knew not, I said, the meaning of these dark hints. I thought the cunning she hinted at, on *both* sides, called rather for contempt than applause. I myself might have been put upon artifices which my heart disdained to practise, had I given way to the *resentment*, which, I was bold to say, was much more justifiable than the *actions* that occasioned it: That it was evident to me from what she had said, that their present suspicions of me were partly owing to this supposed superior cunning of my Brother, and partly to the consciousness, that the usage I met with might naturally produce a reason for such suspicions: That it was very unhappy for me, to be made the Butt of my Brother's Wit: That it would have been more to his praise, to have aimed at shewing a kind heart, than a cunning head: That nevertheless, I wished, he knew *himself* as well as I imagined I knew him; and he would then have less conceit of his abilities: Which abilities would, in my opinion, be less thought of, if his power to do ill offices were not much greater than they.

I was vexed. I could not help making this reflection. The dupe the other, too probably, makes of him, thro' his own Spy, deserved it. But I so little approve of this low art in either, that were I but tolerably

tolerably used, the vileness of that man, that Joseph Leman, should be inquired into.

She was sorry, she said, to find, that I thought so disparagingly of my Brother. He was a young man both of learning and parts.

Learning enough, I said, to make him vain of it among us women: But not of *parts* sufficient to make his Learning valuable either to himself, or to anybody else.

She wished, indeed, that he had more good-nature: But she feared, that I had too great an opinion of Somebody else, to think so well of my Brother, as a Sister ought: Since, between the two, there was a sort of Rivalry as to abilities, that made them hate one another.

Rivalry, Madam, said I!—If that be the case, or whether it be or not, I wish they both understood better than either of them seems to do, what it becomes Gentlemen, and men of liberal Education, to be, and to do.—Neither of them, then, would glory in what they ought to be ashamed of.

But waving this subject, it was not impossible, I said, that they might find a little of my writing, and a Pen or two, and a little Ink [Hated Art!—or rather, hateful the necessity for it!] as I was not permitted to go up to put them out of the way: But if they did, I must be contented. And I assured her, that, take what time they pleased, I would not go in to disturb them, but would be either in or near the Garden, in this Summer-house, or in the Cedar one, or about my Poultry-yard, or near the great Cascade, till I was ordered to return to my prison. With like cunning I said, that I supposed the unkind Search would not be made, till the servants had dined; because I doubted not, that the pert Betty Barnes, who knew all the corners of my apartment and closet, would be employed in it.

She hoped, she said, that nothing could be found that would give a handle against me : For, she would assure me, the motives to the Search, on my Mother's part especially, were, that she hoped to find reason rather to acquit than to blame me ; and that my Father might be induced to see me to-morrow night, or Wednesday morning, with temper : With *tendernefs*, I should rather say, said she ; for he is resolved so to do, if no new offence be given.

Ah ! Madam, said I—

Why that Ah, Madam, and shaking your head so significantly ?

I wish, Madam, that I may not have more reason to dread my Father's continued displeasure, than to hope for his returning *tendernefs*.

You don't *know*, my dear !—Things may take a turn—Things may not be so bad as you fear—

Dearest Madam, have you any consolation to give me ?—

Why, my dear, it is possible, that *you* may be more compliable than you have been.

Why raised you my hopes, Madam !—Don't let me think my dear Aunt Hervey cruel to a Niece who truly honours her.

I may tell you more perhaps, said she (but in confidence, in absolute confidence) if the inquiry within come out in your favour. Do you know of any-thing above that can be found to your disadvantage ?—

Some papers they will find, I doubt : But I must take consequences. My Brother and Sister will be at hand with their good-natured constructions. I am made desperate, and care not what is found.

I hope, I *earnestly* hope, said she, that nothing can be found, that will impeach your discretion ; and then—But I may say too much—

And away she went, having added to my perplexity.

But I now can think of nothing but this Interview—Would to Heaven it were over!—To meet to quarrel—But, let him take what measures he will, I will not stay a *moment* with him, if he be not quite calm and resigned.

Don't you see how crooked some of my lines are? Don't you see how some of the letters stagger more than others?—That is when this Interview is more in my head than my Subject.

But, after all, should I, *ought* I, to meet him? How have I taken it for granted, that I should!—I wish there were time to take your advice. Yet you are so loth to speak *quite* out—But *that* I owe, as you own, to the difficulty of my situation.

I should have mentioned, that in the course of this conversation I besought my Aunt to stand my friend, and to put in a word for me, on my approaching trial; and to endeavour to procure me *time for consideration*, if I could obtain nothing else.

She told me, that, after the Ceremony was performed [*Odious confirmation of a hint in my Cousin Dolly's Letter!*] I should have what time I pleased to reconcile myself to my lot, before Cohabitation.

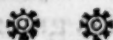
This put me out of all patience.

She requested of me in *her* turn, she said, that I would resolve to meet them all with chearful duty, and with a spirit of absolute acquiescence. It was in my power to make them all happy. And how joyful would it be to her, she said, to see my Father, my Mother, my Uncles, my Brother, my Sister, all embracing me with raptures, and folding me by turns to their fond hearts, and congratulating each other on their restored happiness! Her own joy, she said, would probably make her motionless and speechless, for a time: And for her Dolly—the poor girl, who had suffered in the esteem of some, for her *grateful* attachment to me, would have every-body love her again.

Will you doubt, my dear, that my next trial will be the most affecting that I have yet had?

My Aunt set forth all this in so strong a light, and I was so particularly touched on my Cousin Dolly's account, that, impatient as I was just before, I was greatly moved: Yet could only shew by my sighs and my tears, how desirable such an event would be to me, could it be brought about upon conditions with which it was possible for me to comply.

Here comes Betty Barnes with my dinner—



THE wench is gone. The time of meeting is at hand. O that he may not come!—But should I, or should I not, meet him?—How I question, without possibility of a timely answer!

Betty, according to my leading hint to my Aunt, boasted to me, that she was to be *employed*, as she called it, after she had eat her own dinner.

She should be sorry, she told me, to have me found out. Yet 'twould be all for my good. I should have it in my power to be forgiven for all at once, before Wednesday night. The confident creature then, to stifle a laugh, put a corner of her apron in her mouth, and went to the door: And on her return, to take away, as I angrily bid her, she begged my excuse—But—But—and then the saucy creature laughed again, she could not help it; to think how I had drawn myself in by my Summer-house dinnering; since it had given so fine an opportunity, by way of surprize, to look into all my private hoards. She thought *something was in the wind*, when my Brother came in to my dining here so readily. Her young master was too hard for every-body. 'Squire Lovelace himself was nothing at all at a quick thought, to her young master.

My Aunt mentioned Mr. Lovelace's boasting behaviour to *his* servants: Perhaps he *may* be so mean!

But

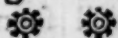
But as to my Brother, he always took a pride in making himself appear to be a man of Parts and Learning to our servants. *Pride* and *Meanness*, I have often thought, are as nearly allied, and as close borderers upon each other, as the Poet tells us *Wit* and *Madness* are.

But why do I trouble you (and myself, at such a crisis) with these impertinencies?—Yet I would forget, if I could, the nearest evil, the Interview; because, my apprehensions increasing as the hour is at hand, I should, were my attention to be ingrossed by them, be unfit to see him, if he does come: And then he will have too much advantage over me, as he will have seeming reason to reproach me with change of resolution.

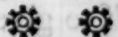
The *Upbraider*, you know, my dear, is in some sense a Superior; while the *Upbraided*, if with reason upbraided, must make a figure as spiritless as conscious.

I know that this wretch will, if he *can*, be his own judge, and *mine* too. But the latter he shall not be.

I dare say, we shall be all to-pieces. But I don't care for that. It would be hard, if I, who have held it out so sturdily to my Father and Uncles, should not—But he is at the garden-door—



I WAS mistaken!—How many noises *un-like*, be made *like* what one fears!—Why flutters the fool so!—



I WILL hasten to deposit this. Then I will, for the last time, go to the usual place, in hopes to find that he has got my Letter. If he *has*, I will not meet him. If he has *not*, I will take it back, and shew him what I have written. That will break the ice, as I may say, and save me much circumlocution and reasoning: And a steadfast adherence to that my

written mind is all that will be necessary.—The Interview must be as short as possible; for should it be discovered, it would furnish a new and strong pretence for the intended evil of Wednesday next.

Perhaps I shall not be able to write again one while. Perhaps not, till I am the miserable property of that Solmes!—But that shall never, never be, while I have my senses.

If your servant find nothing from me by Wednesday morning, you may conclude that I can then neither write to you, nor receive your favours.

In that case, pity and pray for me, my beloved friend, and continue to me that place in your affection, which is the pride of my life, and the only comfort left to

Your

CL. HARLOWE.

LETTER XXXII.

Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, To Miss HOWE.

St. Albans, Tuesday Morn. past One.

O my dearest friend!

AFTER what I had resolved upon, as by my former, what shall I write? What *can* I? With what consciousness, even by *Letter*, do I approach you!—You will soon hear (if already you have not heard from the mouth of common fame) that your Clarissa Harlowe is gone off with a man!

I am busying myself to give you the particulars at large. The whole twenty-four hours of each day (to begin the moment I can fix) shall be employed in it till it is finished: Every one of the hours, I mean, that will be spared me by this interrupting man, to whom I have made myself so foolishly accountable for too many of them. Rest is departed from me. I have no call for That: And That has

no

no balm for the wounds of my mind. So you'll have all those hours without interruption till the account is ended.

But will you receive, shall you be *permitted* to receive, my Letters, after what I have done?

O, my dearest friend!—But I must make the best of it. I hope that will not be very bad! Yet am I convinced, that I did a rash and inexcusable thing, in meeting him; and all his tenderness, all his vows, cannot pacify my inward reproaches on that account.

The bearer comes to you, my dear, for the little parcel of Linen which I sent you with far better and more agreeable hopes.

Send not my Letters. Send the Linen only: Except you will favour me with one line, to tell me, you love me still; and that you will suspend your censures till you have the whole before you. I am the readier to send thus early, because if you have deposited any-thing for me, you may cause it to be taken back, or with-hold any-thing you had but intended to send.

Adieu, my dearest friend!—I beseech you to love me still—But, alas! what will your Mother say?—What will mine?—What my other Relations?—and what my dear Mrs. Norton? And how will my Brother and Sister triumph?—

I cannot at present tell you how, or where, you can direct to me. For very early shall I leave this place; harassed and fatigued to death. But, when I can do nothing else, constant use has made me able to write. Long, very long, has that been all my amusement and pleasure: Yet could not *that* have been such to me, had I not had *you*, my best-beloved friend, to write to. Once more adieu. Pity and pray for

Your

CL. HARLOWE.

LET.

LETTER XXXIII.

Miss HOWE, To Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Tuesday, Nine o'Clock.

I Write, because you injoin me to do so. Love you still!—How can I help it, if I would? You may believe how I stand aghast, your Letter communicating the first news—Good God of Heaven and Earth!—But what shall I say?—I am all impatience for particulars.

Lord have mercy upon me!—But can it be?

My Mother will *indeed* be astonished!—How can I tell it her?—It was but last night (upon some jealousies put into her head by your foolish Uncle) that I assured her, and this upon the strength of your *own* assurances, that neither man nor devil would be able to induce you to take a step that was in the least derogatory to the most punctilious honour.

But, once more, Can it be? What woman, at this rate!—But, God preserve you!

Let nothing escape you in your Letters. Direct them for me however to Mrs. Knollys's, till further notice.

✂ ✂

OBSERVE, my dear, that I don't blame *You* by all this—Your Relations only are in fault!—Yet how you came to change your mind is the surprising thing.

How to break it to my Mother, I know not. Yet, if she hear it first from any other, and find I knew it before, she will believe it to be by my connivance!—Yet, as I hope to live, I know not how to break it to her.

But this is teasing you.—I am sure, without intention.

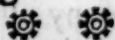
Let me now repeat my former advice.—If you are

not

CLARISSA HARLOWE. 235

not married by this time, be sure delay not the Ceremony. Since things are as they are, I wish it were thought that you were privately married before you went away. If these men plead AUTHORITY to our pain, when we are *theirs*—why should we not, in such a case as *this*, make some good out of the hated word, for our reputation, when we are induced to violate a more natural one?

Your Brother and Sister [That vexes me almost as much any-thing!] have now their ends. Now, I suppose, will go forward alterations of Wills, and such-like spiteful doings.



MISS LLOYD and Miss Biddulph this moment send up their names. They are out of breath, Kitty says, to speak to me—Easy to guess their errand!—I must see my Mother, before I see them. I have no way but to shew her your Letter, to clear myself. I shall not be able to say a word, till she has run herself out of her first breath.—Forgive me, my dear—Surprize makes me write thus. If your messenger did not wait, and were not those young Ladies below, I would write it over again, for fear of afflicting you.

I send what you write for. If there be any-thing else you want that is in my power, command without reserve

Your ever-affectionate

ANNA HOWE.

L E T T E R XXXIV.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, To Miss HOWE.

Tuesday Night.

I Think myself obliged to thank you, my dear Miss Howe, for your condescension, in taking notice of a creature who has occasioned you so much scandal.

I am grieved on this account, as much, I verily think, as for the evil itself, Tell

Tell me—But yet I am afraid to know—what your Mother said.

I long, and yet I dread to be told, what the young Ladies my companions, now never more perhaps to be so, say of me.

They cannot, however, say worse of me than I will of myself. Self-accusation shall flow in every line of my narrative where I think I am justly censurable. If any-thing can arise from the account I am going to give you, for extenuation of my fault (for that is all a person can hope for, who cannot excuse herself) I know I may expect it from your Friendship, tho' not from the Charity of any other: Since by this time I doubt not every mouth is opened against me; and all that know Clarissa Harlowe condemn the fugitive daughter.



AFTER I had deposited my Letter to you, written down to the last hour, as I may say, I returned to the Ivy Summer-house; first taking back my Letter from the loose bricks: And there I endeavoured, as coolly as my situation would permit, to recollect and lay together several incidents that had passed between my Aunt and me; and, comparing them with some of the contents of my Cousin Dolly's Letter, I began to hope, that I needed not to be so very apprehensive as I have been of next Wednesday. And thus I argued with myself.

‘ Wednesday cannot possibly be the Day they intend, altho’ to intimidate me they may wish me to think it is: For the Settlements are unsigned: Nor have they been offered me to sign. I can chuse whether I will or will not put my hand to them; hard as it will be to refuse if my Father tender them to me—Besides, Did not my Father and Mother propose, if I made compulsion necessary, to go to my

‘ my Uncles themselves, in order to be out of the
 ‘ way of my appeals? Whereas they intend to be
 ‘ present on Wednesday. And however affecting
 ‘ to me the thought of meeting them and all my
 ‘ friends in full assembly is, perhaps it is the very
 ‘ thing I ought to wish for : Since my Brother and
 ‘ Sister had such an opinion of my interest in them,
 ‘ that they got me excluded from their presence, as
 ‘ a measure which they thought previously necessary
 ‘ to carry on their designs.

‘ Nor have I reason to doubt, but that (as I had
 ‘ before argued with myself) I shall be able to bring
 ‘ over some of my relations to my party ; and, being
 ‘ brought face to face with my Brother, that I shall
 ‘ expose his malevolence, and of consequence weaken
 ‘ his power.

‘ Then, supposing the very worst, challenging the
 ‘ Minister as I shall challenge him, he will not pre-
 ‘ sume to proceed : Nor surely will Mr. Solmes dare
 ‘ to accept my refusing and struggling hand. And
 ‘ finally, if nothing else will do, nor procure me de-
 ‘ lay, I can plead Scruples of Conscience, and even
 ‘ pretend prior obligation ; for, my dear, I have given
 ‘ Mr. Lovelace room to hope (as you will see in
 ‘ one of my Letters in your hands) that I will be no
 ‘ other man’s while he is single, and gives me not
 ‘ wilful and premeditated cause of offence against him ;
 ‘ and this in order to rein-in his resentments on the
 ‘ declared animosity of my Brother and Uncles to
 ‘ him. And as I shall appeal, or refer my scruples
 ‘ on this head, to the good Dr. Lewen, it is impos-
 ‘ sible but that my Mother and Aunt (if nobody else)
 ‘ must be affected with this plea.’

Revolving cursorily these things, I congratulated
 myself, that I had resolved against going away with
 Mr. Lovelace.

I told you, my dear, that I would not spare myself ;
 and

and I enumerate these particulars as so many arguments to condemn the action I have been so unhappily betrayed into. An argument that concludes against me with the greater force, as I must acknowledge, that I was apprehensive, that what my Cousin Dolly mentions as from Betty and from my Sister, was told *her*, that she should tell *me*, in order to make me desperate, and perhaps *to push me upon some such step as I have been driven to take, as the most effectual means to ruin me with my Father and Uncles.*

God forgive me if I judge too hardly of their views!—But if I do *not*, it follows, that they laid a wicked snare for me; and that I have been caught in it.—And now may they triumph, if they *can* triumph, in the ruin of a Sister, who never wished or intended hurt to them!

As the above kind of reasoning had lessened my apprehensions as to the Wednesday, it added to those I had of meeting Mr. Lovelace—Now, as it seemed, not only the nearest, but the heaviest evil; principally indeed because *nearest*; for little did I dream (foolish creature that I was, and every way beset!) of the event proving what it has proved. I expected a contention with him, 'tis true, as he had not my Letter: But I thought it would be very strange, as I mentioned in one of my former (*a*), if I, who had so steadily held out against characters so venerable, against authorities so sacred, as I may say, when I thought them unreasonably exerted, should not find myself more equal to such a trial as this; especially as I had so much reason to be displeased with him for not having taken away my Letter.

On what a point of time may one's worldly happiness depend! Had I had but two hours more to consider of the matter, and to attend to and improve upon these new lights, as I may call them—But even then,

(a) See p. 223.

perhaps, I might have given him a meeting.—Foot that I was! what had I to do to give him hope that I would *personally* acquaint him with the reason for my change of mind, if I did change it?

O my dear! an obliging temper is a very dangerous temper!—By endeavouring to gratify others, it is evermore disobliging itself!

When the Bell rang to call the servants to dinner, Betty came to me, and asked, if I had any commands before she went to hers; repeating her hint, that she should be *employed*; adding, that she believed it was expected, that I should not come up till she came down, or till I saw my Aunt or Miss Hervey.

I asked her some questions about the Cascade, which had been out of order, and lately mended; and expressed a curiosity to see how it played, in order to induce her [How cunning to cheat myself, as it proved!] to go thither, if she found me not where she left me; it being at a part of the garden most distant from the Ivy Summer-house.

She could hardly have got into the house when I heard the first signal—O how my heart fluttered!—But no time was to be lost. I flew to the garden-door; and seeing a clear coast, unbolted the already unlocked door—And there was He, all impatience, waiting for me.

A panic next to fainting seized me when I saw him. My heart seemed convulsed; and I trembled so, that I should hardly have kept my feet, had he not supported me.

Fear nothing, dearest creature, said he—Let us hasten away—The chariot is at hand—And, by this sweet condescension, you have obliged me beyond expression or return.

Recovering my spirits a little, as he kept drawing me after him, O Mr. Lovelace, said I, I cannot go with you—*Indeed* I cannot—I wrote you word so—

Let

Let go my hand, and you shall see my Letter. It has lain there from yesterday morning, till within this half-hour. I bid you watch to the last for a Letter from me, lest I should be obliged to revoke the appointment; and had you followed the direction, you would have found it.

I have been watched, my dearest life, said he, half out of breath—I have been watched in every step I took: And my trusty servant has been watched too, ever since Saturday; and dared not to come near your wall.—And here we shall be discovered in a moment.—Speed away, my Charmer—This is the moment of your deliverance—If you neglect this opportunity, you *never* can have such another.

What is it you mean, Sir?—Let go my hand: For I tell you (struggling vehemently) that I will sooner die than go with you.

Good God! said he, with a look of wildness and surprize, what is it I hear!—But (still drawing me after him, as he retreated farther from the door) it is no time to argue—By all that's Good you must go—Surely you cannot doubt my honour, nor give me cause to question your own.

As you value me, Mr. Lovelace, urge me no farther. I come fixed, and resolved. Let me give you the Letter I had written. My further reasons shall follow; and they will convince you, that I ought not to go.

Nothing, Madam, can convince me—By all that's Sacred, I will not leave you. To leave you now, would be to lose you for ever—

Am I to be thus compelled? interrupted I, with equal indignation and vehemence—Let go my hands.—I am resolved not to go with you—And I will convince you, that I *ought* not.

All my friends expect you, Madam—All your own are determined against you—Wednesday next is the
the

the day, the important, perhaps the fatal day! Would you stay to be Solmes's Wife?—Can this be your determination at last?

No, never, never, will I be that man's—But I will not go with you! [Draw me not thus—How dare you, Sir? I would not have seen you, but to tell you so]. I had not met you, but for fear you would have been guilty of some rashness—And, once more, I will *not* go—What mean you!—Striving with all my force to get from him.

What can have possessed my angel, said he (quitting my hands, and with a gentler voice) that after so much ill-usage from your relations; vows so solemn on my part; an affection so ardent; you stab me with a refusal to stand by your own appointment?

We have no time to talk, Mr. Lovelace. I will give you my reasons at a better opportunity. I cannot go with you now—And, once more, urge me no farther—Surely I am not to be compelled by every-body!

I see how it is, said he, with a dejected, but passionate air—What a severe fate is mine!—At length your spirit is subdued!—Your Brother and Sister have prevailed; and I must give up all my hopes to a wretch so *truly* despicable—

Once more I tell you, interrupted I, I never will be his—All may end on Wednesday differently from what you expect—

And it may *not*!—And then, good heaven!—

It is to be their last effort, as I have reason to believe—

And I have reason to believe so too—Since, if you stay, you will inevitably be Solmes's Wife.

Not so, interrupted I—I have obliged them in one point. They will be in good humour with me. I shall gain time at least. I am sure I shall. I have several ways to gain time.

And what, Madam, will gaining time do? It is plain

plain you have not a hope beyond that—It is plain you have not, by putting all upon that precarious issue. O my dearest, dearest life! let me beseech you not to run a risque of this consequence. I can convince you, that it will be *more* than a risque if you go back, that you will on Wednesday next be Solmes's Wife.—Prevent therefore, now that it is in your power to prevent, the fatal mischiefs that will follow such a dreadful certainty.

While I have any room for hope, it concerns *your* honour, Mr. Lovelace, as well as mine (if you have the value for me you pretend, and wish me to believe you) that my conduct in this great point should justify my prudence.

Your Prudence, Madam! When has that been questionable? Yet what stead has either your Prudence or your Duty stood you in, with people so strangely determined?

And then he pathetically enumerated the different instances of the harsh treatment I had met with; imputing all to the malice and caprice of a Brother, who set every-body against him: And insisting, that I had no other way to bring about a Reconciliation with my Father and Uncles, than by putting myself out of the power of my Brother's inveterate malice.

Your Brother's whole reliance, proceeded he, has been upon your easiness to bear his insults. Your whole family will seek to *you*, when you have freed yourself from this disgraceful oppression. When they know you are with those who *can* and *will* right you, they will give up to you your own Estate. Why then, putting his arm round me, and again drawing me with a gentle force after him, do you hesitate a moment?—Now is the time—Fly with me then, I beseech you, my dearest creature! Trust your persecuted adorer. Have we not suffered in the same cause? If any imputations are cast upon you, give me the

the honour (*as I shall be found to deserve it*) to call you mine; and, when you are so, shall I not be able to protect both your person and character?

Urge me no more, Mr. Lovelace, I conjure you. You yourself have given me a hint, which I will speak plainer to, than prudence, perhaps, on any other occasion, would allow. I am convinced, that Wednesday next (If I had time, I would give you my reasons) is not intended to be the day we had both so much dreaded: And if after that day shall be over, I find my friends determined in Mr. Solmes's favour, I will then contrive some way to meet you with Miss Howe, who is not your enemy: And when the Solemnity has passed, I shall think that step a duty, which *till* then will be criminal to take: Since now my Father's Authority is unimpeached by any greater.

Dearest Madam—

Nay, Mr. Lovelace, if you now dispute—if, after this more favourable declaration, than I had the thought of making, you are not satisfied, I shall know what to think both of your gratitude and generosity.

The case, Madam, admits not of this alternative. I am all gratitude upon it. I cannot express how much I should be delighted with the charming hope you have given me, were you not next Wednesday, if you stay, to be another man's. Think, dearest creature! what an heightening of my anguish the distant hope you bid me look up to, is, taken in this light!

Depend, depend upon it, I will die sooner than be Mr. Solmes's. If you would have me rely upon *your* honour, why should you doubt of *mine*?

I doubt not your *honour*, Madam; your *power* is all I doubt. You never, never can have such another opportunity.—Dearest creature, permit me. And he was again drawing me after him.

Whither, Sir, do you draw me?—Leave me this moment—Do you seek to keep me till my return shall

grow dangerous or impracticable? This moment let me go, if you would have me think tolerably of you.

My happiness, Madam, both here and hereafter, and the safety of all your implacable family, depend upon this moment.

To Providence, Mr. Lovelace, and to the Law, will I leave the safety of my friends. You shall not threaten me into a rashness that my heart condemns!—Shall *I*, to promote your happiness, as you call it, destroy all my future peace of mind?

You trifle with me, my dear life, just as our better prospects begin to open. The way is clear; just now it is clear; but you may be prevented in a moment. What is it you doubt?—May I perish eternally, if your will shall not be a Law to me in every thing! All my relations expect you. Your own appointment calls upon you. Next Wednesday—Dearest creature! think of next Wednesday!—And to what, is it I urge you, but to take a step that sooner than any other will reconcile you to all whom you have most reason to value in your family?

Let me judge for myself, Sir. Do not you, who blame my friends for endeavouring to compel me, *yourself* seek to compel me. I won't bear it. Your earnestness gives me greater apprehensions, and greater reluctance. Let me go back, then—Let me, before it is too late, go back, that it may not be worse for both—What mean you by this forcible treatment? Is it thus that I am to judge of the intire submission to my will which you have so often vowed?—Unhand me this moment, or I will cry out for help.

I will obey you, my dearest creature!—And quitted my hand with a look full of tender despondency, that, knowing the violence of his temper, half-concerned me for him. Yet I was hastening from him, when, with a solemn air, looking upon his sword, but catching, as it were, his hand from it, he folded
both

both his arms, as if a sudden thought had recovered him from an intended rashness.

Stay, one moment—But one moment stay, O best beloved of my Soul!—Your retreat is secure, if you *will* go : The key lies down at the door.—But, O Madam, next *Wednesday*, and you are Mr. Solmes's!—Fly me not so eagerly—Hear me but a few words.

When near the garden door, I stopped; and was the more satisfied, as I saw the key there, by which I could let myself in again at pleasure. But, being uneasy lest I should be missed, I told him, I could stay no longer. I had already stayed too long. I would write to him all my reasons. And depend upon it, Mr. Lovelace, said I (just upon the point of stooping for the key, in order to return) I will die, rather than have that man. You know what I have promised, if I find myself in danger.

One word, Madam, however; one word more (approaching me, his arms still folded, as if, as I thought, he would not be tempted to mischief.) Remember only, that I come at your appointment, to redeem you, at the hazard of my life, from your gaolers and persecutors, with a resolution, God is my witness, or may he for ever blast me! (that was his shocking imprecation) to be a Father, Uncle, Brother, and, as I humbly hoped, in your own good time, a *Husband* to you, all in one. But since I find you are so ready to cry out for help against me, which must bring down upon me the vengeance of all your family, I am contented to run all risks. I will not ask you to retreat with *me*; I will attend you into the garden, and into the *house*, if I am not intercepted.—Nay, be not surprised, Madam. The help you would have called for, I will attend you to; for I will face them all: But not as a revenger, if they provoke me not too much. You shall see what I can further bear for your sake—And let us both see, if expostu-

lation, and the behaviour of a gentleman *to* them, will not procure me the treatment due to a gentleman *from* them.

Had he offered to draw his sword upon himself, I was prepared to have despised him for supposing me such a poor novice, as to be intimidated by an artifice so common. But this resolution, uttered with so serious an air, of accompanying me in to my friends, made me gasp with terror.

What mean you, Mr. Lovelace? said I: I beseech you leave me—Leave me, Sir, I beseech you.

Excuse me, Madam! I beg you to excuse me. I have long enough skulked like a thief about these lonely walls—Long, too long, have I borne the insults of your Brother, and other of your relations. Absence but heightens malice. I am desperate. I have but this one chance for it; for is not the day after to-morrow *Wednesday*? I have encouraged virulence by my tameness.—Yet *tame* I will still be. You shall see, Madam, what I will bear for your sake. My sword shall be put sheathed into your hands (And he offered it to me in the scabbard)—My heart, if you please, clapping one hand upon his breast, shall afford a sheath to your Brother's sword. Life is nothing, if I lose you—Be pleased, Madam, to shew me the way into the garden; (moving towards the door). I will attend you, tho' to my fate!--But too happy, be it what it will, if I receive it in your presence. Lead on, dear creature! (putting his sword into his belt)—You shall see what I can bear for you. And he stooped, and took up the key; and offered it to the lock; but dropped it again, without opening the door, upon my earnest expostulations.

What can you mean, Mr. Lovelace? said I—Would you thus expose *yourself*? Would you thus expose *me*?—Is this your generosity? Is every-body to take advantage thus of the weakness of my temper?

And

And I wept. I could not help it.

He threw himself upon his knees at my feet—Who can bear, said he (with an ardour that could not be feigned, his own eyes glistening) Who can bear, to behold such sweet emotion?—O Charmer of my heart (and, respectfully still kneeling, he took my hand with both his, pressing it to his lips) command me *with* you, command me *from* you; in every way I am all implicit obedience—But I appeal to all you know of your relations cruelty to *you*, their determined malice against *me*, and as determined favour to the *man* you tell me you hate (And, oh! Madam, if you did not hate him, I should hardly think there would be a merit in your approbation, place it where you would)—I appeal to every-thing you know, to all you have suffered, whether you have not reason to be apprehensive of *that* Wednesday, which is my terror!—Whether you can possibly have such another opportunity—The chariot ready: My friends with impatience expecting the result of *your own* appointment: A man whose will shall be intirely your will, imploring you, thus, on his knees, imploring you—to be *your own Mistress*; that is all: *Nor will I ask for your favour, but as upon full proof I shall appear to deserve it.* Fortune, alliance, unobjectible!—O my beloved creature! pressing my hand once more to his lips, let not such an opportunity slip. You never, never, will have such another.

I bid him rise. He arose; and I told him, that were I not thus unaccountably hurried by his impatience, I doubted not to convince him, that both he and I had looked upon next Wednesday with greater apprehension than was necessary. I was proceeding to give him my reasons; but he broke in upon me—

Had I, Madam, but the shadow of a probability to hope what *you* hope, I would be all obedience and resignation. But the Licence is actually got: The

Parson is provided: That pedant Brand is the man. O my dearest creature, do these preparations mean only a trial?

You know not, Sir, were the worst to be intended, and weak as you think me, what a spirit I have: You know not what I can do, and how I can resist, when I think myself meanly or unreasonably dealt with: Nor do you know what I have already suffered, what I have already borne, knowing to whose unbrotherly instigations all is to be ascribed.—

I may expect all things, Madam, interrupted he, from the nobleness of your mind. But your spirits may fail you—What may not be apprehended from the invincible temper of a Father so positive, to a Daughter so dutiful?—Fainting will not save you: They will not, perhaps, be sorry for such an effect of their barbarity. What will signify expostulations against a Ceremony performed? Must not *All*, the *dreadful All*, follow, that is torture to my heart but to think of? Nobody to appeal to, of what avail will your resistance be against the consequences of a Rite witnessed to by the imposers of it; and those your nearest relations?

I was sure, I said, of procuring a delay at least. Many ways I had to procure delay. Nothing could be so fatal to us both, as for me now to be found with him. My apprehensions on this score, I told him, grew too strong for my heart. I should think very hardly of him, if he sought to detain me longer. But his acquiescence should engage my gratitude.

And then stooping to take up the key to let myself into the garden, he started, and looked as if he had heard somebody near the door, on the inside; clapping his hand on his sword.

This frightened me so, that I thought I should have sunk down at his feet. But he instantly re-assured me; He thought, he said, he had heard a rustling
against

against the door: But *had* it been so, the noise would have been stronger. It was only the Effect of his apprehension for me.

And then taking up the key, he presented it to me. —If you *will* go, Madam—Yet I cannot, cannot leave you!—I must enter the garden with you—Forgive me, but I *must* enter the garden with you.

And will you, will you thus ungenerously, Mr. Lovelace, take advantage of my fears?—of my wishes, to prevent mischief? I, vain fool, to be concerned for every-one; nobody for me!

Dearest creature! interrupted he, holding my hand as I tremblingly offered to put the key to the lock. Let *me*, if you *will* go, open the door. But once more, consider, could you possibly obtain that delay which seems to be your only dependence, whether you may not be closer confined? I know they have already had *that* in consideration. Will you not, in this case, be prevented from corresponding either with Miss Howe, or with me?—Who then shall assist you in your escape, if escape you would?—From your chamber-window only permitted to view the garden you must not enter into, how will you wish for the opportunity you now have, if your hatred to Solmes continue?—But, alas! that cannot continue. If you go back, it must be from the impulses of a yielding (which you'll call, a dutiful) heart, tired and teased out of your own will.

—I have no patience, Sir, to be thus constrained. Must I never be at liberty to follow my own judgment? Be the consequence what it may, I will not be thus constrained.

And then, freeing my hand, I again offered the key to the door.

Down the ready kneeler dropt between me and that: And can you, can you, Madam, once more on my knees let me ask you, look with an indifferent eye
upon

upon the evils that may follow? Provoked as I have been, and triumphed over as I shall be, if your Brother succeeds, my *own* heart shudders, at times, at the thoughts of what *must* happen; and can *yours* be unconcerned? Let me beseech you, dearest creature, to consider all these things; and lose not this only opportunity. My intelligence—

Never, Mr. Lovelace, interrupted I, give so much credit to the words of a traitor. Your base intelligencer is but a servant. He may pretend to know more than he has grounds for, in order to earn the wages of corruption. You know not what contrivances I can find out.

I was once more offering the key to the lock, when, starting from his knees, with a voice of affrightment, loudly whispering, and as if out of breath, *They are at the door, my beloved creature!* And taking the key from me, he fluttered with it, as if he would double-lock it. And instantly a voice from within cried out, bursting against the door, as if to break it open, the person repeating his violent pushes, *Are you there?—Come up this moment!—This moment!—Here they are—Here they are both together!—Your pistol this moment!—Your gun!—* Then another push, and another. He at the same moment drew his sword, and clapping it naked under his arm, took both my trembling hands in his; and, drawing me swiftly after him, Fly, fly, my Charmer; this moment is all you have for it, said he.—Your Brother!—Your Uncles!—Or this Solmes!—They will instantly burst the door—Fly, my dearest life, if you would not be more cruelly used than ever—If you would not see two or three murders committed at your feet, fly, fly, I beseech you.

O Lord!—Help, help, cried the fool, all amaze and confusion, frightened beyond the power of controuling. Now

Now behind me, now before me, now on this side, now on that, turn'd I my affrighted face, in the same moment; expecting a furious Brother here, armed servants there, an enraged Sister screaming, and a Father armed with terror in his countenance more dreadful than even the drawn sword which I saw, or those I apprehended. I ran as fast as he; yet knew not that I ran; my fears adding wings to my feet, at the same time that they took all power of thinking from me. My fears, which probably would not have suffered me to know what course to take, had I not had him to urge and draw me after him: Especially as I beheld a man, who must have come out of the door, keeping us in his eye, running now towards us; then back to the garden; beckoning and calling to others, whom I supposed *he* saw, although the turning of the wall hindered *me* from seeing them; and whom I imagined to be my Brother, my Father, and their Servants.

Thus terrified, I was got out of sight of the door in a very few minutes: And then, although quite breathless between running and apprehension, he put my arm under his, his drawn sword in the other hand, and hurried me on still faster: My voice, however, contradicting my action; crying, No, no, no, all the while, straining my neck to look back, as long as the walls of the garden and park were within sight, and till he brought me to the chariot: Where, attending, were two armed servants of his own, and two of Lord M's, on horseback.

Here I must suspend my relation for a while: For now I am come to this said period of it, my indiscretion stares me in the face; and my shame and my grief give me a compunction that is more poignant methinks than if I had a dagger in my heart. To have it to reflect, that I should so inconsiderately give in to an Interview, which, had I known either myself
or

or him, or in the least considered the circumstances of the case, I might have supposed, would put me into the power of his Resolution, and out of that of my own Reason.

For, might I not have believed, that *he*, who thought he had cause to apprehend that he was on the point of losing a person who had cost him so much pains and trouble, would not hinder her, if possible, from returning? That he, who knew I had promised to give him up for ever if insisted on as a condition of Reconciliation, would not endeavour to put it out of my power to do so? In short, that he, who had artfully forbore, to send for my Letter (for he could *not* be watched, my dear) lest he should find in it a countermand to my appointment (as I myself could apprehend, altho' I profited not by the apprehension) would want a device to keep me with him till the danger of having our meeting discovered might throw me absolutely into his power, to avoid my own worse usage, and the mischiefs which might have ensued (perhaps in my very sight) had my friends and he met?

But if it shall come out, that the person within the garden was his corrupted implement, employed to frighten me away with him, do you think, my dear, that I shall not have reason to hate him and myself still more? I hope his heart cannot be so deep and so vile a one: I hope it cannot! But how came it to pass, that one man could get out at the garden-door, and no more? How, that that man kept aloof, as it were, and pursued us not; nor ran back to alarm the house? My fright, and my distance, would not let me be certain; but really this man, as I now recollect, had the air of that vile Joseph Leman.

O why, why, my dear friends!—But wherefore blame I them, when I had argued myself into a hope, not improbable, that even the dreadful trial I was to undergo so soon, might turn out better than if I had

been

been directly carried away from the presence of my once indulgent parents, who might possibly intend that trial to be the last I should have had?

Would to heaven, that I had stood it however! Then, if I had afterwards done, what now I have been prevailed upon, or perhaps foolishly frightened to do, I should not have been stung so much by inward reproach as now I am: And this would have been a great evil avoided.

You know, my dear, that your Clarissa's mind was ever above justifying her own failings by those of others. God forgive those of my friends who have acted cruelly by me! But their faults *are* their own, and not excuses for mine. And mine began early: For I ought not to have corresponded with him.

O the vile incroacher! how my indignation, at times, rises at him! Thus to lead a young creature (too much indeed relying upon her own strength) from evil to evil!—This last evil, altho' the *remote*, yet *sure* consequence of my first—my prohibited correspondence! By a Father *early* prohibited.

How much more properly had I acted, with regard to that correspondence, had I, once for all, when he was forbidden to visit me, and I to receive his visits, pleaded the authority by which I ought to have been bound, and denied to write to him!—But I thought I could *proceed*, or *stop*, as I pleased. I supposed it concerned *me, more than any other, to be the arbitress of the quarrels of unruly spirits*—And now I find my presumption punished—Punished, as other sins frequently are, by *itself*!

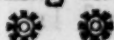
As to this last rashness; now, that it is too late, I plainly see how I ought to have conducted myself. As he knew I had but one way of transmitting to him the knowledge of what befel me; as he knew, that my fate was upon a crisis with my friends; and that I had, in my Letter to him, reserved the liberty of re-
vocation;

vocation; I should not have been solicitous whether he had got my Letter or not: When he had come, and found I did not answer his signal, he would presently have resorted to the loose bricks, and there been satisfied by the date of my Letter, that it was his own fault, that he had it not before. But, *governed by the same pragmatical motives* which induced me to correspond with him at first, I was again afraid, truly, with my foolish and busy prescience, that the disappointment would have thrown him into the way of receiving fresh insults from the same persons; which might have made him guilty of some violence to them. And so, to save him an *apprehended* rashness, I have rushed into a *real* one myself. And what vexes me more, is, that it is plain to me now, by all his behaviour, that he had as great a confidence in my weakness, as I had in my own strength. And so, in a point intirely relative to my honour, he has triumphed; for he has not been mistaken in me, while I have in myself!

Tell me, my dear Miss Howe, tell me truly, if your unbiaffed heart does not despise me?—It must! for your mind and mine were ever *one*; and I despise *myself*!—And well I may: For could the giddiest and most inconsiderate girl in England have done worse than I shall appear to have done in the eye of the world? Since my crime will be known without the provocations, and without the artifices of the betrayer too; while it will be a high aggravation, that better things were expected from me, than from many others.

You charge me *to marry the first opportunity*—Ah! my dear! *another* of the blessed effects of my folly—That's as much in my power now as—as I am myself!—And can I besides give a sanction immediately to his deluding arts?—Can I *avoid* being angry with him for tricking me thus, as I may say (and as I have called it to him) out of *myself*?—For compelling me
to

to take a step so contrary to all my resolutions, and assurances given to you; a step so dreadfully inconvenient to myself; so disgraceful and so grievous (as it must be) to my dear Mother, were I to be less regardful of any other of my family or friends—You don't know, nor can you imagine, my dear, how I am mortified!—How much I am sunk in my own opinion!—I, that was proposed for an example, truly, to others!—O that I were again in my Father's house, stealing down with a Letter *to* you; my heart beating with expectation of finding one *from* you!



THIS is the Wednesday morning I dreaded so much, that I once thought of it as the day of my doom: But of the Monday, it is plain, I ought to have been most apprehensive. Had I stayed, and had the worst I dreaded happened, my friends would then have been answerable for the consequences, if any bad ones had followed:—But now, I have this *only* consolation left me (a very poor one, you'll say!) that I have cleared *them* of blame, and taken it all upon *myself*!

You will not wonder to see this narrative so dismally scrawled. It is owing to different pens and ink, all bad, and written by snatches of time; my hand trembling too with fatigue and grief.

I will not add to the length of it, by the particulars of his behaviour to me, and of our conversation at St. Albans, and since; because those will come in course in the continuation of my Story; which no doubt you will expect from me.

Only thus much I will say, that he is extremely respectful (even obsequiously so) at present, tho' I am so much dissatisfied with him and myself, that he has hitherto had no great cause to praise my complaisance to him. Indeed, I can hardly, at times, bear the seducer in my sight.

The lodgings I am in, are inconvenient. I shall
not

not stay in them : So it signifies nothing to tell you how to direct to me hither. And where my next may be, as yet I know not.

He knows that I am writing to you ; and has offered to send my Letter, when finished, by a servant of his. But I thought I could not be too cautious, as I am now situated, in having a Letter of this importance conveyed to you. Who knows what such a man may do ? So very wicked a contriver ! The contrivance, if a contrivance, to get me away, so insolently mean ! — But I hope it is not a contrivance neither ! — Yet, be that as it will, I must say, that the *best* of him, and of my prospects with him, are bad : And yet, having inrolled myself among the too-late repenters, who shall pity me ?

Nevertheless, I will dare to hope for a continued interest in your affections (I shall be miserable indeed if I may not !) and to be remembered in your daily prayers. For neither time nor accident shall ever make me cease to be

Your faithful and affectionate

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

LETTER XXXV.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOSEPH LEMAN.

Honest JOSEPH, Sat. April 8.

AT length your beloved young Lady has consented to free herself from the cruel treatment she has so long borne. She is to meet me without the garden-door at about Four o'clock on Monday afternoon. I told you she had promised to do so. She has confirmed her promise. Thank Heaven, she has confirmed her promise.

I shall have a chariot-and-six ready in the by-road fronting the private path to Harlowe-paddock ; and several of my friends and servants not far off, armed to protect her, if there be occasion : But every one charged

charged to avoid mischief. That, you know, has always been my principal care.

All my fear is, that when she comes to the point, the over-niceness of her principles will make her waver, and want to go back: Altho' *her* honour is *my* honour, you know, and *mine* is *hers*. If she should, and I should be unable to prevail upon her, all your past services will avail nothing, and she will be lost to me for ever: The prey then of that cursed Solmes, whose vile stinginess will never permit him to do good to any of the servants of the family.

I have no doubt of your fidelity, honest Joseph; nor of your zeal to serve an injured gentleman, and an oppressed young Lady. You see by the confidence I repose in you, that I have *not*; more particularly, on this very important occasion, in which your assistance may crown the work: For, if she waver, a little innocent contrivance will be necessary.

Be very mindful therefore of the following directions: Take them into your heart. This will probably be your last trouble, until my Beloved and I are joined in holy wedlock: And then we will be sure to take care of you. You know what I have promised. No Man ever reproached me for breach of word.

These, then, honest Joseph, are they:

Contrive to be in the garden, in *disguise* if possible, and unseen by your young Lady. If you find the garden-door unbolted, you will know that she and I are together, altho' you should not see her go out at it. It will be locked, but my key shall be on the ground just without the door, that you may open it with yours, as it may be needful.

If you hear our voices parleying, keep at the door till I cry Hem, hem, twice: But be watchful for this signal, for I must not hem very loud, lest she should

take it for a signal. Perhaps, in struggling to prevail upon the dear creature, I may have an opportunity to strike the door hard with my elbow, or heel, to confirm you—Then you are to make a violent burst against the door, as if you would break it open, drawing backward and forward the bolt in a hurry : Then, with another push, but with more noise than strength, lest the lock give way, cry out (as if you saw some of the family) Come up, come up, instantly !—Here they are ! Here they are !—Hasten ! This instant hasten ! And mention Swords, Pistols, Guns, with as terrible a voice as you can cry out with. Then shall I prevail upon her no doubt, if loth before, to fly. If I cannot, I will enter the garden with her, and the house too, be the consequence what it will. But so affrighted, there is no question but she will fly.

When you think us at a sufficient distance (And I shall raise my voice urging her swifter flight, that you may guess at *that*) then open the door with your key : But you must be sure to open it very cautiously, lest we should not be far enough off. I would not have her know you have a hand in this matter, out of my great regard to you.

When you have opened the door, take your key out of the lock, and put it in your pocket : Then, stooping for mine, put it in the lock on the *inside*, that it may appear as if the door was opened by herself, with a key, which they will suppose of my procuring (it being new) and left open by us.

They *should* conclude she is gone off by her own consent, that they may not pursue us : That they may see no hopes of tempting her back again. In either case, mischief might happen, you know.

But you must take notice, that you are only to open the door with your key, in case none of the family come up to interrupt us, and before we are quite

quite gone : For, if they do, you'll find by what follows, that you must not open the door at all. Let them, on breaking it open, or by getting over the wall, find my key on the ground, if they will.

If they do not come to interrupt us, and if you, by help of your key, come out, follow us at a distance ; and, with uplifted hands, and wild and impatient gestures (running backward and forward, for fear you should come too near us ; and as if you saw somebody coming to your assistance) cry out for Help, help, and to hasten. Then shall we be soon at the chariot.

Tell the family, that you saw me enter a chariot with her : A dozen, or more, men on horseback, attending us ; all arm'd ; some with blunderbusses, as you believe ; and that we took the quite contrary way to that we shall take.

You see, honest Joseph, how careful I am, as well as you, to avoid mischief.

Observe to keep at such a distance that she may not discover who you are. Take long strides, to alter your gait ; and hold up your head, honest Joseph ; and she'll not know it to be you. Mens airs and gaits are as various and as peculiar as their faces. Pluck a stake out of one of the hedges ; and tug at it, tho' it may come easy : This, if she turn back, will look terrible, and account for your not following us faster. Then returning with it, shouldered, brag to the family, what you would have done, could you have overtaken us, rather than your young Lady should have been carried off by such a—And you may call me names, and curse me. And these airs will make you look valiant, and in earnest. You see, honest Joseph, I am always contriving to give *you* reputation. No man suffers by serving me.

But, if our parley should last longer than I wish ;
S 2 and

and if any of her friends miss her before I cry, Hem, hem, twice; then in order to save yourself (which is a very great point with me, I assure you) make the same noise as above: But, as I directed before, open not the door with your key. On the contrary, wish for a key with all your heart; but, for fear any of them should by accident have a key about them, keep in readiness half a dozen little gravel-stones, no bigger than peas, and thrust two or three slyly into the key-hole; which will hinder their key from turning round. It is good, you know, Joseph, to provide against every accident in such an important case as this. And let this be your cry, instead of the other, if any of my enemies come in your sight, as you seem to be trying to burst the door open, Sir, Sir! or Madam, Madam! O Lord, hasten! O Lord, hasten! Mr. Lovelace!—Mr. Lovelace!—And very loud—And that shall quicken me more than it shall those you call to.—If it be Betty, and only Betty, I shall think worse of your Art of making Love (*a*), than of your fidelity, if you can't find a way to amuse her, and put her upon a false scent.

You must tell them, that your young Lady seemed to run as fast off with me, as I with her. This will also confirm to them that all pursuit is in vain. An end will be hereby put to Solmes's hopes: And her friends, after a while, will be more studious to be reconciled to her, than to get her back. So you will be an happy instrument of great good to all round. And This will one day be acknowledged by both families. You will then be every one's favourite; and every good servant, for the future, will be proud to be likened to honest Joseph Leman.

If she should guess at you, or find you out, I have it already in my head to write a Letter for you to

(*a*) See p. 70, 71.

copy (a); which occasionally produced, will set you right with her.

This one time, be diligent, be careful: This will be the crown of all: And once more, depend for a recompence upon the honour of

Your assured Friend,

R. LOVEFACE.

You need not be so much afraid of going too far with Betty. If you *should* make a match with her, she is a very likely creature, tho' a vixen, as you say. I have an admirable receipt to cure a termagant wife.—Never fear, Joseph, but thou shalt be master of thine own house. If she be very troublesome, I can teach thee how to break her heart in a twelvemonth; and *honestly* too;—or the precept would not be mine.

I inclose a new earnest of my future favour.

L E T T E R XXXVI.

To ROBERT LOVEFACE, Esquier. *His Honner.*

Honnered Sir, Sunday Morning, April 9.

I Must confesse I am infinnitely oblidge to your honner's bounty. But this last command!—It seems so intricket! Lord be merciful to me, how have I been led from littel stepps to grate stepps!—And if I should be found out!—But your Honner says, you will take me into your Honner's sarvise, and proteckt me, if as I should at any time be found out; and raise my wages besides; or set me upp in a good Inne; which is my ambishion. And you will be honnerable and kind to my dearest young Lady, God love her.—But who can be unkind to she?

I will do the best I am able, since your Honner will be apt to lose her, as your Honner says, if I do

(a) See Letter liii. in this Vol.

not; and a man so stingie will be apt to gain her. But mayhap my dearest younge Lady will not make all this trouble needful. If she has promised, she will stand to it, I dare to say.

I love your Honner for contriveing to save mischief so well. I thought till I know'd your Honner, that you was verry mischevous, and please your Honner. But find it to be clene contrary. Your Honner, it is plane, means mighty well by every-body, as far as I see. As I am sure I do myself; for I am, althoff a very plane Man, and all that, a very honest one, I thank my God. And have good principles, and have kept my young Lady's precepts always in mind: For she goes no-where, but saves a soul or two, more or less.

So, commending myself to your Honner's further favour, not forgetting the Inne, when your Honner shall so please, and a good one offers; for Plases are no inherritanfes now-a-days. And, I hope, your Honner will not think me a dishonest Man for faving your Honner agenst my duty, as it may look; but only as my conscience clears me.

Be pleased, howsomever, if it like your Honner, not to call me, *bonnest Joseph*, and *bonnest Joseph*, so often. For, althoff I think myself very honest, and all that; yet I am touched a little, for fear I should not do the quite right thing: And too besides, your Honner has such a fesshious way with you, as that I hardly know whether you are in jest, or earnest, when your Honner calls me honest so often.

I am a very plane man, and seldom have writ to such honourable gentlemen; so you will be good enuff to pass by every thing, as I have often said, and need not now say over again.

As to Mrs. Betty; I tho'te, indede, she looked above me. But she comes on very well, nathelesse. I could like her better, iff she was better to my
young

young Lady. But she has too much wit for so plane a man. Natheless, if she was to angrer me, althoff it is a shame to bete a woman; yet I colde make shift to throe my hat at her, or so, your Honner.

But that same reseit, iff your Honner so please, to cure a shrowish wife. It would more encurrege to wed, iff so be one know'd it before-hand, as one may say. So likewise, if one knoed one could *bonestly*, as your Honner says, and as of the handy-work of God, in one twelve-month—

But, I shall grow impertinent to such a grate man—And *hereafter* may do for that, as she turnes out: For one mought be loth to part with her, mayhap, so *verry* soon too; especially if she was to make the notable Lanlady your Honner put into my head.

Butt wonce moer, beging your Honer's parden, and promissing all dilligence and exsacknesse, I reste,

Your Honner's dewtifull Sarvant to commande,

JOSEPH LEMAN.

LETTER XXXVII.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;

St. Albans, Monday Night.

I Snatch a few moments while my Beloved is retired (as I hope to rest) to perform my promise. No pursuit—Nor have I apprehensions of any; tho' I must make my charmer dread that there will be one.

And now, let me tell thee, that never was joy so complete as mine!—But let me inquire—Is not the angel flown away?

* * *

O no! She is in the next apartment!—Securely mine!—Mine for ever!

*O ecstasy!—My heart will burst my breast,
To leap into her bosom!—*

I knew, that the whole stupid family were in a combination to do my business for me. I told thee, that they were all working for me, like so many underground moles; and still more blind than the moles are said to be, unknowing that they did so. I myself, the director of their principal motions; which falling in with the malice of their little hearts, they took to be all their own.

But did I say, my joy was perfect?—O no!—It receives some abatement from my disgusted Pride. For how can I endure to think, that I owe more to her relations persecutions, than to her favour for me?—Or even, as far as I know, to her preference of me to another man?

But let me not indulge this thought. Were I to do so, it might cost my charmer dear. Let me rejoice, that she has passed the Rubicon: That she cannot return: That, as I have ordered it, the flight will appear to the Implacables to be altogether with her own consent: And that, if I doubt her Love, I can put her to trials as mortifying to her Niceness, as glorious to my Pride.—For, let me tell thee, dearly as I love her, if I thought there was but the shadow of a doubt in her mind, whether she preferred me to any man living, I would shew her no mercy.

Tuesday, Day-dawn.

BUT, on the wings of Love, I fly to my charmer, who perhaps by this time is rising to encourage the tardy-dawn. I have not slept a wink of the hour and half I lay down to invite sleep. It seems to me, that I am not so much Body, as to require such vulgar renovation.

But why, as in the chariot, as in the inn, at alighting, all heart-bursting grief, my dearest creature? So persecuted, as thou wert persecuted!—So much in danger of the most abhorred compulsion!—Yet grief so *unsuspectably* sincere for an escape so critical!—

Take

Take care—Take care, O beloved of my Soul! for jealous is the heart in which Love has erected a temple to thee.

Yet, it must be allowed, that such a sudden transition must affect her; must ice her over. When a little more used to her new situation; when her hurries are at an end; when she sees how religiously I shall observe all her INJUNCTIONS, she will undoubtedly have the gratitude to distinguish between the confinement she has escaped from, and the liberty she has reason to rejoice in.

She comes! She comes!—And the Sun is just rising to attend her!—Adieu!—Be half as happy as I am (for all diffidences, like night-fogs before the Sun, disperse at her approach) and, next myself, thou wilt be the happiest man in the world.

L E T T E R XXXVIII.

Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, To Miss HOWE.

Wednesday, April 12.

I WILL pursue my melancholy Story.

Being thus hurried to the chariot, it would have been to no purpose to have refused entering into it, had he not in my fright lifted me in, as he did: And it instantly drove away a full gallop, and stopt not till it brought us to St. Albans; which was just as the day shut in.

I thought I should have fainted several times by the way. With uplifted hands and eyes, God protect me, said I often to myself!—Can it be I, that am here!—My eyes running over, and my heart ready to burst with sighs as involuntary as my flight.

How different, how inexpressibly different, the gay wretch; visibly triumphing (as I could not but construe his almost rapturous joy) in the success of
his

his arts ! But overflowing with complimentary flourishes, yet respectfully distant his address, all the way we *flew* ; for that, rather than *galloping*, was the motion of the horses ; which took, as I believe, a round-about way, to prevent being traced.

I have reason to think, there were other horsemen at his devotion ; three or four different persons, above the rank of servants, galloping by us now-and-then on each side of the chariot : But he took no notice of them ; and I had too much grief, mingled with indignation, notwithstanding all his blandishments, to ask any questions about them, or any-thing else.

Think, my dear, what were my thoughts on alighting from the chariot ; having no attendant of my own Sex ; no cloaths but what I had on, and those little suited for such a journey as I had *already* taken, and was *still* to take : Neither hood nor hat, nor any thing but a handkerchief about my neck and shoulders : Fatigued to death : My mind still more fatigued than my body : And in such a foam the horses, that every one in the Inn we put up at guessed (they could not do otherwise) that I was a young giddy creature, who had run away from her friends. This it was easy to see, by their whispering and gaping ; more of the people of the house also coming in by turns, than were necessary for the attendance.

The mistress of the house, whom he sent in to me, shewed me another apartment ; and, seeing me ready to faint, brought me hartshorn and water ; and then, upon my desiring to be left alone for half an hour, retired : For I found my heart ready to burst, on revolving every-thing in my thoughts : And the moment she was gone, fastening the door, I threw myself into an old great chair, and gave way to a violent flood of tears ; which a little relieved me.

Mr. Lovelace, sooner than I wished, sent up the gentlewoman, who pressed me, in his name, to admit

mit my Brother, or to come down to him : For he had told her, I was his Sister ; and that he had brought me, against my will, and without warning, from a friend's house, where I had been all the winter, in order to prevent my marrying against the consent of my friends ; to whom he was now conducting me ; and that, having given me no time for a travelling dress, I was greatly offended at him.

So, my dear, your frank, your open-hearted friend, was forced to countenance this tale ; which indeed suited me the better, because I was unable for some time to talk, speak, or look up ; and so my dejection, and grief, and silence, might very well pass before the gentlewoman and her niece who attended me, as a fit of fullness.

The room I was in being a bed-chamber, I chose to go down, at his repeated message, attended by the mistress of the house, to that in which he was. He approached me with great respect, yet not exceeding a brotherly politeness, where a Brother *is* polite ; and, calling me his dearest Sister, asked after the state of my mind ; and hoped I would forgive him ; for never Brother half so well loved a Sister, as he me.

A wretch !—How naturally did he fall into the character, altho' I was so much out of mine !

Unthinking creatures have some comfort in the shortness of their views ; in their unapprehensiveness ; and that they penetrate not beyond the present moment : In short, that they *are* unthinking !—But, for a person of my thoughtful disposition, who has been accustomed to look forward, as well to the *possible*, as to the *probable*, what comfort can I have in my reflections ?

But let me give you the particulars of our conversation a little before and after our supper-time, joining both in one.

When

When we were alone, he besought me (I cannot say but with all the tokens of a passionate and respectful tenderness) to be better reconciled to myself, and to him : He repeated all the vows of honour and inviolable affection that he ever made me : He promised to be wholly governed by me in every future step : He asked me to give him leave to propose, Whether I chose to set out next day to either of his Aunts ?

I was silent. I knew not what to say, nor what to do.

Whether I chose to have private lodgings procured for me, in either of those Ladies neighbourhood, as were once my thoughts ?

I was still silent.

Whether I chose to go to either of Lord M's Seats ; that of Berks, or that in the county we were in ?

In lodgings, I said, any-where, where he was not to be.

He had *promised This*, he owned ; and he would religiously keep to his word, as soon as he found all danger of pursuit over ; and that I was settled to my mind. But, if the place were indifferent to me, London was the safest, and the most private : And his relations should all visit me there, the moment I thought fit to admit them. His Cousin Charlotte, particularly, should attend me, as my companion, if I would accept of her, as soon as she was able to go abroad. Mean time, would I go to Lady Betty Lawrance's (Lady Sarah was a melancholy woman) ? I should be the most welcome guest she ever received.

I told him, I wished not to go (immediately, however, and in the frame I was in, and likely not to be out of) to any of his relations : That my reputation was concerned, to have *him* absent from me :—That, if I were in some private lodging (the meaner the less to be suspected, as it would be known,
that

that I went away by his means; and he would be supposed to have provided me handsome accommodations) it would be most suitable both to my mind and to my situation: That this might be best, I should think, in the country for *me*; in town for *him*. And no matter how soon he was known to be there.

If he might deliver his opinion, he said, it was, that, since I declined going to any of his relations, London was the only place in the world to be private in. Every new-comer in a country-town or village excited a curiosity: A person of my figure [And many compliments he made me] would excite more. Even messages and letters, where none used to be brought, would occasion inquiry. He had not provided a lodging any-where, supposing I would chuse to go either to London, where accommodations of that sort might be fixed upon in an hour's time, or to Lady Betty's; or to Lord M's Hertfordshire Seat, where was housekeeper an excellent woman, Mrs. Greme, such another as my Norton.

To be sure, I said, if I were pursued, it would be in their first passion; and some one of *his* relations houses would be the place they would expect to find me at—I knew not what to do.

My pleasure should determine him, he said, be it what it would. Only that I were safe, was all he was solicitous about. He had lodgings in town; but he did not offer to propose them. He knew, I would have more objection to go to them, than I could have to go to Lord M's, or to Lady Betty's.

No doubt of it, I replied, with such an indignation in my manner, as made him run over with professions, that he was far from proposing them, or wishing for my acceptance of them. And again he repeated, That my Honour and Safety were all he was solicitous about; assuring me, that my will should be a Law to him, in every particular. I

I was too peevish, and too much afflicted, and indeed too much incensed against him, to take well any-thing he said.

I thought myself, I said, extremely unhappy. I knew not what to determine upon; My reputation now, no doubt, utterly ruined: Destitute of cloaths; unfit to be seen by any-body: My very indigence, as I might call it, proclaiming my folly to every one who saw me; who would suppose that I had been taken at advantage, or had given an undue one; and had no power over either my will or my actions: That I could not but think I had been dealt artfully with:—That he had seemed to have taken, what he might suppose, the just measure of my weakness, founded on my Youth and Inexperience: That I could not forgive myself for meeting him: That my heart bled for the distresses of my Father and Mother, on this occasion: That I would give the world, and all my hopes in it, to have been still in my Father's house, whatever had been my usage: That, let him protest and vow what he would, I saw something low and selfish in his Love, that he could study to put a young creature upon making such a sacrifice of her duty and conscience: When a person actuated by a generous Love, must seek to oblige the object of it, in every-thing essential to her honour, and to her peace of mind.

He was very attentive to all I said; never offering to interrupt me once. His answer to every article, almost methodically, shewed his memory.

‘ What I had said, he told me, had made him very grave; and he would answer accordingly.

‘ He was grieved at his heart, to find that he had so little share in my favour or confidence.

‘ As to my *Reputation* (he must be very sincere with me) that could not suffer half so much by the step I so greatly regretted to have taken, as by the
‘ con-

‘ confinement, and equally foolish and unjust treatment, I had met with from my relations : That every mouth was full of blame of them, of my Brother and Sister particularly ; and of wonder at my patience : That he must repeat what he had written to me he believed more than once, That my friends themselves expected, that I should take a proper opportunity to free myself from their persecutions ; why else did they confine me ? That my exalted character as he called it, would still bear me out, with those who knew *Me* ; who knew my *Brother’s* and *Sister’s* motives ; and who knew the wretch they were for compelling me to have.

‘ With regard to *cloaths* ; Who, as matters were circumstanced, could expect that I should be able to bring away any others than those I had on at the time ? For *present* use or wear, all the Ladies of his family would take a pride to supply me : For *future*, the product of the best looms, not only in England, but throughout the world, were at my command.

‘ If I wanted *money*, as no doubt I must, he should be proud to supply me : Would to heaven, he might presume to hope, there were but one interest between us !’

And then he would fain have had me to accept of a Bank Note of an hundred Pounds ; which, unawares to me, he put into my hand : But which, you may be sure, I refused with warmth.

‘ He was inexpressibly grieved and surprised, he said, to hear me say he had acted *artfully* by me. He came provided, according to my *confirmed* appointment [*A wretch, to upbraid me thus !*] ‘ to redeem me from my persecutors ; and little expected a change of sentiment, and that he should have so much difficulty to prevail upon me, as he had met with : That perhaps I might think his offer to go

‘ *into*

' *into the garden with me*, and to face my assembled
 ' relations, was a piece of *Art* only: But that if I
 ' did, I wronged him: Since, to this hour, seeing
 ' my excessive uneasiness, he wished with all his soul
 ' he had been permitted to accompany me in. It
 ' was always his maxim to brave a threatened dan-
 ' ger. Threateners, where they have an opportunity
 ' to put in force their threats, were seldom to be
 ' feared. But had he been assured of a private stab,
 ' or of as many death's wounds as there were persons
 ' in my family (made desperate as he should have
 ' been by my return) he would have attended me
 ' into the house.'

So, my dear, what I have to do, is to hold myself
 inexcusable for meeting such a determined and auda-
 cious spirit; that's all!—I have hardly any question
 now, but that he would have contrived some wicked
 stratagem or other to have got me away, had I met
 him at a midnight hour, as once or twice I had
 thoughts to do; and that would have been more ter-
 rible still.

He concluded this part of his talk, with saying,
 ' That he doubted not, but that had he attended me
 ' in, he should have come off in every one's opinion
 ' so well, that he should have had general leave to
 ' renew his visits.'

He went on—' He must be so bold as to tell me,
 ' that he should have paid a visit of this kind (but
 ' indeed accompanied by several of his trusty friends)
 ' had I *not* met him; and that very afternoon too;
 ' for he could not tamely let the dreadful Wednesday
 ' come, without making some effort to change their
 ' determinations.'

What, my dear, was to be done with such a man!
 ' That therefore for my sake, as well as for his
 ' own, he had reason to wish that a disease so despe-
 ' rate had been attempted to be overcome by as de-
 sperate

‘ sperate a remedy. We all know, said he, that great
 ‘ ends are sometimes brought about by the very means
 ‘ by which they are endeavoured to be frustrated.’

My present situation, I am sure, thought I, affords
 a sad evidence of this truth !

I was silent all this time. My blame was indeed
 turn’d inward. Sometimes, too, I was half-frighted
 at his audaciousness : At others, had the less incli-
 nation to interrupt him, being excessively fatigued,
 and my spirits sunk to nothing, with the view even
 of the best prospects with such a man.

This gave him opportunity to proceed : And that
 he did ; assuming a still more serious air.

‘ As to what further remained for him to say, in
 ‘ answer to what I had said, he hoped I would par-
 ‘ don him ; but, upon his Soul, he was concerned,
 ‘ infinitely concerned, he repeated (his colour and
 ‘ his voice rising) that it was *necessary* for him to ob-
 ‘ serve, how much I chose rather to have run the
 ‘ risque of being Solmes’s Wife, than to have it in
 ‘ my power to reward a man, who, I must forgive
 ‘ him, had been as much insulted on *my* account, as
 ‘ I had been on *his*—who had watched my com-
 ‘ mands, and (pardon me, Madam) every *change-*
 ‘ *able* motion of your pen, all hours, in all weathers,
 ‘ and with a cheerfulness and ardor that nothing
 ‘ but the most faithful and obsequious passion could
 ‘ inspire.’

I now, my dear, began to revive into a little more
 warmth of attention.—

‘ And all, Madam, for what ?’—How I stared !
 for he stopt then a moment or two—‘ *Only*, went he
 ‘ on, to prevail upon you to free yourself from un-
 ‘ generous and base oppression—

Sir, Sir ! indignantly said I—

‘ Hear me but out, dearest Madam !—My heart is
 ‘ full—I *must* speak what I have to say—To be told

‘ (for your words are yet in my ears, and at my heart!)
 ‘ that you would give the world, *and all your hopes*
 ‘ *in it*, to have been still in your cruel and gloomy
 ‘ Father’s house—

Not a word, Sir, against my Father!—I will not bear that—

‘ *Whatever had been your usage:—And you have*
 ‘ a credulity, Madam, against all probability, if you
 ‘ believe you should have avoided being Solmes’s
 ‘ Wife: That I have put you upon *sacrificing your*
 ‘ *Duty and Conscience*—Yet, dearest creature! see
 ‘ you not the contradiction that your warmth of
 ‘ temper has surprised you into, when the reluctance
 ‘ you shewed to the last to leave your persecutors,
 ‘ has cleared your Conscience from the least reproach
 ‘ of this sort?’—

O Sir! Sir! are you so critical then? Are you so light in your anger, as to dwell upon words?—

Indeed, my dear, I have since thought, that his anger was not owing to that sudden *impetus*, which cannot be easily bridled; but rather was a sort of *manageable* anger, let loose to intimidate me.

‘ Forgive me, Madam—I have just done—Have
 ‘ I not, in your own opinion, hazarded my life to
 ‘ redeem you from oppression?—Yet is not my re-
 ‘ ward, after all, precarious?—For, Madam, *have*
 ‘ *you not conditioned with me* (and, hard as the con-
 ‘ dition is, *most sacredly will I observe it*) *that all my*
 ‘ *hope must be remote?* That you are determined to
 ‘ have it in your power *to favour or reject me totally,*
 ‘ as you please?’—

See, my dear! In every respect my condition changed for the worse! Is it in *my power* to take your advice, if I should think it ever so right to take it (a)?—

‘ And

• (a) Clarissa has been censured as behaving to Mr. Lovelace, in their first conversation at St. Albans, and afterwards, with

‘ And have you not furthermore declared, proceeded he, *that you will engage to renounce me for ever, if your friends insist upon that cruel renunciation, as the terms of being reconciled to you?*

‘ But nevertheless, Madam, all the merit of having saved you from an odious compulsion, shall be mine. I glory in it, tho’ I were to lose you for ever—*As I see I am but too likely to do*, from your present displeasure; and especially, *if your friends insist upon the terms you are ready to comply with.*

‘ That you are *your own mistress*, thro’ my means, is, I repeat, my boast. *As such*, I humbly implore your favour—And *that only upon the conditions I have yielded to hope for it.*—As I do now *thus humbly* (the proud wretch falling on one knee) your forgiveness, for so long detaining your ear, and for all the plain-dealing that my undesigning heart would not be denied to utter by my lips.’

O Sir, pray rise!—Let the *obliged* kneel, if one of us must kneel!—But nevertheless, proceed not in this strain, I *beseech* you. You have had a great *deal* of trouble about me: But had you let me know *in time*, that you expected to be rewarded for it at the price of my duty, I should have spared you much of it.

• too much reserve, and even with haughtiness. Surely those
• who have thought her to blame on this account, have not paid
• a due attention to the Story. How early, as above, and in
• what immediately follows, does he remind her of the terms of
• distance which she prescribed to him, before she was in his
• power, *in hopes to leave a door open for the reconciliation with*
• *her friends* which her heart was set upon! And how artfully
• does he (unrequired) promise to observe the conditions, which
• she, in her present circumstances and situation (in pursuance of
• Miss Howe’s advice) would gladly have dispensed with!—
• To say nothing of the resentment which she was under a *ne-*
• *cessity* to shew, at the manner of his getting her away, in order
• to justify to him *the sincerity of her refusal to go off with him.*
• See, in her subsequent Letter to Miss Howe, N^o xli. her own
• sense upon this subject.

Far be it from me, Sir, to depreciate merit so *extraordinary*. But let me say, that had it not been for the forbidden correspondence I was teased by you into; and which I had not continued (every Letter for many Letters, intended to be the last) but because I thought you a sufferer from my friends; I had not been either confined or ill-treated: Nor would my Brother's low-meant violence have had a foundation to work upon.

I am far from thinking my case would have been so very desperate as you imagine, had I staid. My Father loved me in his heart: He would not see me before; and I wanted *only* to see him, and to be heard; and a *delay of his sentence* was the least thing I expected from the tryal I was to stand.

You are boasting of your merits, Sir: Let merit be your boast: Nothing else can attract me. If *personal* considerations had principal weight with me, either in Solmes's disfavour, or in your favour, I should despise *myself*: If you value yourself upon them, in preference to the *person* of the poor Solmes, I shall despise *you*!

You may glory in your fancied merits in getting me away: But the cause of *your* glory, I tell you plainly, is *my* shame.

Make to yourself a title to my regard, which I can better approve of; or else you will not have so much merit with *me*, as you have with *yourself*.

But here, Sir, like the first pair (I, at least, driven out of my paradise) are we recriminating. No more shall you need to tell me of your *Sufferings*, and your *Merits*!—your *All hours*, and *All weathers*! For I will bear them in memory as long as I live; and if it be impossible for me to *reward* them, be ever ready to *own* the obligation. All that I desire of you now, is, to leave it to myself to seek for some private abode: To take the chariot with you to London, or elsewhere: And, if I have any further occasion for your assistance

assistance and protection, I will signify it to you, and be still *further* obliged to you.

You are warm, my dearest life!—But indeed there is no occasion for it. Had I any views unworthy of my faithful Love for you, I should not have been so honest in my declarations.

Then he began again to vow the sincerity of his intentions.

But I took him up short: I am willing to *believe* you, Sir. It would be insupportable but to suppose there were a *necessity* for such solemn declarations [At this he seemed to collect himself, as I may say, into a little more circumspection]. If I thought there *were*, I would not sit with you here, in a public Inn, I assure you, altho' *cheated* hither, as far as I know, by methods (You must excuse me, Sir!) which but to *suspect*, will hardly let me have patience either with you or with myself.—But no more of this, just now: Let me I beseech you, *good Sir*, bowing [I was very angry!] let me only know whether you intend to leave me; or whether I have only escaped from one confinement to another?

Cheated hither, as far as you know, Madam! Let you *know* (and with that air too, charming, though grievous to my heart!) *if you have only escaped from one confinement to another*—Amazing! perfectly amazing! And can there be a necessity for me to answer this?—You are absolutely your own mistress.—It were very strange, if you were not. *The moment you are in a place of safety*, I will leave you. To one condition only, give me leave to beg your consent: It is this: That you will be pleased, now you are so intirely in your own power, to renew a promise *voluntarily* made before; *voluntarily*, or I would not now presume to request it; for altho' I would not be thought capable of growing upon concession, yet I cannot bear to think of losing the ground your good-

ness had given me room to hope I had gained ;
 ' That, make up how you please with your relations,
 ' you will never marry any other man, while I am
 ' living and single, unless I should be so wicked as to
 ' give new cause for high displeasure.'

I hesitate not to confirm this promise, Sir, upon your *own* condition. In what manner do you expect me to confirm it ?

Only, Madam, by your word.

Then I never will.

He had the assurance (*I was now in his power*) to salute me as a sealing of my promise, as he called it. His motion was so sudden, that I was not aware of it. It would have looked *affected* to be very angry ; yet I could not be pleased, considering this as a *leading freedom*, from a spirit so audacious and incroaching : And he might see, that I was not.

He passed all that by with an air peculiar to himself—Enough, enough, dearest Madam ! And now let me beg of you but to conquer this dreadful uneasiness, which gives me to apprehend too much for my jealous love to bear ; and it shall be my whole endeavour to deserve your favour, and to make you the happiest woman in the world ; as I shall be the happiest of men.

I broke from him to write to you my preceding Letter ; but refused to send it by his servant, as I told you. The mistress of the house helped me to a messenger, who was to carry what you should give him to Lord M's Seat in Hertfordshire, directed for Mrs. Greme the housekeeper there. And early in the morning, for fear of pursuit, we were to set out that way : And there he proposed to exchange the chariot-and-six for a chaise-and-pair of his own, which he had at that Seat, as it would be a less-noticed conveyance.

I looked over my little stock of money ; and found it to be no more than Seven guineas and some silver :

The

The rest of my stock was but Fifty guineas, and that five more than I thought it was, when my Sister challenged me as to the sum I had by me (a): And those I left in my escritoire, little intending to go away with him.

Indeed my case abounds with a shocking number of indelicate circumstances. Among the rest, I was forced to account to *him*, who knew I could have no cloaths but what I had on, how I came to have linen with you (for he could not but know I sent for it); lest he should imagine I had an early design to go away with him, and made that a *part of the preparation*.

He most heartily wished, he said, for my mind's sake, that your Mother would have afforded me her protection; and delivered himself upon this subject with equal *freedom* and concern.

There are, my dear Miss Howe, a multitude of punctilios and decorums, which a young creature must dispense with, who, in a situation like mine, makes a man the intimate attendant of her person. I could now, I think, give twenty reasons stronger than any I have heretofore mentioned, why women of the *least delicacy* should never think of incurring the danger and disgrace of taking the step I have been drawn in to take, but with horror and aversion; and why they should look upon the man who shall tempt them to it, as the vilest and most selfish of seducers.

BEFORE five o' clock (Tuesday morning) the maid-servant came up to tell me, my *Brother* was ready, and that breakfast also waited for me in the parlour. I went down with a heart as heavy as my eyes, and received great acknowledgements and compliments from him on being so soon dressed, and ready (as he interpreted it) to continue our journey.

(a) See Vol. I. p. 284.

He had the thought, which I had not (for what had I to do with thinking, who had it not when I stood most in need of it?) to purchase for me a velvet hood, and a short cloak, trimmed with silver, without saying any-thing to me. He must reward himself, the artful in-croacher said before the landlady and her maids and niece, for his forethought; and would salute his pretty sullen Sister!—He took his reward; and, as he said, a tear with it. While he assured me, still before them (a vile wretch!) that I had nothing to fear from meeting with Parents who so dearly loved me.—

How could I be complaisant, my dear, to such a man as this?

When we had got into the chariot, and it began to move, he asked me, whether I had any objection to go to Lord M's Hertfordshire Seat? His Lordship, he said, was at his Berkshire one.

I told him, I chose not to go, *as yet*, to any of his relations; for that would indicate a plain defiance to my own. My choice was, to go to a private lodging, and for him to be at a distance from me: At least, till I heard how things were taken by my friends—For that altho' I had but little hopes of a Reconciliation as it *was*; yet if they knew I was in his protection, or in that of any of his friends (which would be looked upon as the same thing) there would not be room for any hopes at all.

I should govern him as I pleased, he solemnly assured me, in every-thing. But he still thought *London* was the best place for me; and if I were once safe there, and in a lodging to my liking, he would go to M. Hall. But, as I approved not of London, he would urge it no further.

He proposed, and I consented, to put up at an Inn in the neighbourhood of *The Lawn* (as he called Lord M's Seat in this County) since I chose not to

go thither. And here I got two hours to myself: which I told him I should pass in writing another Letter to you (meaning my narrative, which, tho' greatly fatigued, I had begun at St. Albans) and in one to my Sister, to apprise the family (whether they were solicitous about it or not) that I was well; and to beg that my cloaths, some particular books, and the fifty guineas I had left in my escritoire, might be sent me.

He asked, If I had considered whither to have them directed?

Indeed not I, I told him: I was a stranger to—

So was he, he interrupted me; but it struck him by chance—

Wicked story-teller!

But, added he, I will tell you, Madam, how it shall be managed—If you don't chuse to go to London, it is, nevertheless, best, that your relations should *think* you there; for then they will absolutely despair of finding you. If you write, be pleased to direct, To be left for you, at Mr. Osgood's, near Soho-square. Mr. Osgood is a man of reputation; And this will effectually amuse them.

Amuse them, my dear!—Amuse whom?—My Father!—my Uncles!—But it must be so!—All his expedients ready, you see!—

I had no objection to this: And I have written accordingly. But what answer I shall have, or whether any, that is what gives me no small anxiety.

This, however, is one consolation; that, if I have an answer, and altho' my Brother should be the writer, it cannot be more severe than the treatment I have of late received from him and my Sister.

Mr. Lovelace staid out about an hour and half; and then came in; impatiently sending up to me no less than four times, to desire admittance. But I sent him word as often, that I was busy; and at last, that I should

should be so, till dinner were ready. He then hastened that, as I heard him now-and-then, with a hearty curse upon the cook and waiters.

This is another of his perfections. I ventured afterwards to check him for his free words, as we sat at dinner.

Having heard him swear at his servant, when below, whom, nevertheless, he owns to be a good one; It is a sad life, said I, these Innkeepers live, Mr. Lovelace.

No; pretty well, I believe—But why, Madam, think you, that fellows, who eat and drink at other mens cost, or they are sorry Innkeepers, should be intitled to pity?

Because of the soldiers they are obliged to quarter; who are generally, I believe, wretched profligates. Bless me! said I, how I heard one of them swear and curse, just now, at a modest meek man, as I judge by his low voice, and gentle answers!—Well do they make it a proverb—*Like a trooper!*

He bit his lip; arose; turned upon his heel; stepped to the glass; and looking *confidently* abashed, if I may so say, Ay, Madam, said he, these troopers are sad swearing fellows. I think their officers should chastise them for it.

I am sure they deserve chastisement, replied I: For Swearing is a most *unmanly* vice, and Cursing as *poor* and *low* a one; since it proclaims the profligate's want of power, and his wickedness at the same time: For, could such a one *punish* as he *speaks*, he would be a fiend!

Charmingly observed, by my Soul, Madam!—The next trooper I hear swear and curse, I'll tell him what an *unmanly*, and what a *poor* wretch he is.

Mrs. Greeme came to pay her *duty* to me, as Mr. Lovelace called it; and was very urgent with me to go to her Lord's house; letting me know what handsome things she had heard her Lord, and his two Nieces,

Nieces, and all the family, say of me; and what wishes for several months past they had put up for the honour she now hoped would soon be done them all.

This gave me some satisfaction, as it confirmed from the mouth of a very good sort of woman all that Mr. Lovelace had told me.

Upon enquiry about a private lodging, she recommended me to a Sister-in-law of hers, eight miles from thence—Where I now am. And what pleased me the better, was, that Mr. Lovelace (of whom I could see she was infinitely observant) obliged her, of his own motion, to accompany me in the chaise; himself riding on horseback, with his two servants, and one of Lord M's. And here we arrived about Four o' clock.

But, as I told you in my former, the lodgings are inconvenient. Mr. Lovelace indeed found great fault with them: And told Mrs. Greme (who had said, that they were not worthy of us) that they came not up even to her account of them. As the house was a mile from town, it was not proper for him, he said, to be so far distant from me, lest any-thing should happen: And yet the apartments were not separate and distinct enough for me to like them, he was sure.

This must be agreeable enough from him, you will believe.

Mrs. Greme and I had a good deal of talk in the chaise about him: She was very easy and free in her answers to all I asked; and has, I find, a very serious turn.

I led her on to say to the following effect; some part of it not unlike what Lord M's dismissed Bailiff had said before; by which I find that all the servants have a like opinion of him.

‘ That Mr. Lovelace was a generous man: That it was hard to say, whether the servants of her Lord’s family loved or feared him most: That her Lord had
‘ a very

' a very great affection for him : That his two noble
 ' Aunts were no less fond of him : That his Cousins
 ' Montague were as good-natured young Ladies as
 ' ever lived : That Lord M. and Lady Sarah and
 ' Lady Betty had proposed several Ladies to him,
 ' before he made his addressees to me ; and even since ;
 ' despairing to move me and my friends in his favour.
 ' But that he had no thoughts of marrying at all,
 ' she had heard him say, if it were not to me : That
 ' as well her Lord as the two Ladies his Sisters were
 ' a good deal concerned at the ill-usage he received
 ' from my family : But admired my character, and
 ' wished to have him married to me (altho' I were
 ' not to have a shilling) in preference to any other
 ' person, from the opinion that they had of the in-
 ' fluence I should have over him. That, to be sure,
 ' Mr. Lovelace was a wild gentleman : But wildness
 ' was a distemper which would cure itself. That her
 ' Lord delighted in his company, whenever he could
 ' get it : But that they often fell out ; and his Lord-
 ' ship was always forced to submit—Indeed, was
 ' half-afraid of him, she believed ; for Mr. Lovelace
 ' would do as he pleased. She mingled a thousand
 ' pities often, that he acted not up to the talents lent
 ' him—Yet would have it, that he had fine qualities
 ' to found a Reformation upon ; and, when the happy
 ' day came, would make amends for all : And of
 ' this all his friends were so assured, that they wished
 ' for nothing so earnestly, as for his marriage.'

This, indifferent as it is, is better than my Bro-
 ther says of him.

The people of the house here are very honest-
 looking industrious folks : Mrs. Sorlings is the gen-
 tlewoman's name. The farm seems well-stocked,
 and thriving. She is a widow ; has two sons, men
 grown, who vie with each other which shall take most
 pains in promoting the common good ; and they are
 both

both of them, I already see, more respectful to two modest young women their Sisters, than my Brother was to his Sister.

I believe I must stay here longer than at first I thought I should.

I ought to have mentioned, that, before I set out for this place, I received your kind Letter (a). Everything is kind from so dear a friend.

I own, that after I had told you of my absolute determination not to go away with him, you might well be surprised, at your first hearing that I was actually gone. The Lord bless me, my dear! I myself, at times, can hardly believe it is I, that have been led to take so strange a step.

I have not the better opinion of Mr. Lovelace for his extravagant volubility. He is too full of professions. He says too many fine things of me, and to me. True respect, true value, I think, lies not in words: Words cannot express it: The silent awe, the humble, the doubting eye, and even the hesitating voice, better shew it by much, than, as our beloved Shakespeare says,

—The rattling tongue

Of saucy and audacious eloquence.

The man indeed at times is all upon the *ecstatic*; one of his phrases; but to my shame and confusion, I must say, that I know too well to what to attribute his transports. In one word, it is To his *triumph*, my dear. And, to impute it to *that* perhaps equally exposes my vanity, and condemns my folly.

We have been alarmed with notions of a pursuit, founded upon a Letter from his intelligencer.

How do different circumstances either sanctify or condemn the same action!—What care ought we to take not to confound the distinctions of right and

(a) See p. 234.

wrong,

wrong, when *Self* comes into the question!—I condemned in Mr. Lovelace the corrupting of a servant of my Father's; and now I am glad to give a kind of *indirect* approbation of that fault, by inquiring of him what he hears, by that or any other way, of the manner in which my relations took my flight. A preconcerted, forward, and artful flight, it must undoubtedly appear to them. How grievous is that to think of!—Yet *how*, as I *am situated*, can I put them right?

Most heavily, he says, they take it; but shew not so much grief as rage. And he can hardly have patience to hear of the virulence and menaces of my Brother against himself. Then a merit is made to me of his forbearance.

What a satisfaction am I robbed of, my dearest friend, when I reflect upon my inconsiderateness! O that I had it still in my power to say I *suffered* wrong, rather than *did* wrong! That others were more wanting in their kindness to me, than I in duty (where duty is owing) to them!

Fie upon me! for *meeting the Seducer*!—Let all end as happily as it now may, I have laid up for myself *remorse for my whole life*.

What still more concerns me is, that every time I see this man, I am still at a greater loss than before what to make of him. I watch every turn of his countenance: And I think I see very deep lines in it. He looks with more meaning, I verily think, than he used to look; yet not more serious; not less gay—I don't know how he looks—But with more confidence a great deal than formerly; and yet he never wanted that.

But here is the thing: I behold him with *fear* now, as conscious of the power my indiscretion has given him over me. And well may he look more elate, when he sees me deprived of all the self-supposed

posed significance, which adorns and exalts a person who has been accustomed to respect; and who now, by a *conscious inferiority*, allows herself *to be overcome*, and in a state of *obligation*, as I may say, to a man who, from an humble suitor to her for her favour, assumes the consequence and airs of a protector.

I shall send this, as my former, by a poor man, who travels every day with pedlary matters. He will leave it at Mrs. Knollys's, as you direct.

If you hear any-thing of my Father and Mother, and of their health, and how my friends were affected by my unhappy step, pray be so good as to write me a few Lines by the messenger, if his waiting for them can be known to you.

I am afraid to ask you, Whether, upon reading that part of my narrative already in your hands, you think any sort of extenuation lies for

Your unhappy

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

L E T T E R XXXIX.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;

Tuesday, Wedn. Apr. 11, 12.

YOU claim my promise, that I will be as particular as possible, in all that passes between me and my goddess. Indeed, I never had a more illustrious Subject to exercise my pen upon. And, moreover, I have leisure; for by her good-will, my access would be as difficult to her, as that of the humblest Slave to an Eastern Monarch. Nothing, then, but inclination to write can be wanting: And since our friendship, and your obliging attendance upon me at the White Hart, will not excuse That, I will endeavour to keep my word.

I parted with thee and thy brethren, with a full resolu-

resolution, thou knowest, to rejoin ye, if she once again disappointed me, in order to go together (attended by our servants, for shew-sake) to the gloomy Father; and demand audience of the tyrant upon the freedoms taken with my character. In short, to have tried by fair means, if fair would do, to make him change his resolutions; and treat his charming *Daughter* with less inhumanity, and me with more civility.

I told thee my reasons for not going in search of a Letter of countermand. I was right; for, if I had, I should have found such a one; and had I received it, she would not have met me. Did she think, that after I had been more than once disappointed, I would not keep her to her promise; that I would not hold her to it, when I had got her in so deeply?

The moment I heard the door unbolt, I was sure of her. That motion made my heart bound to my throat. But when That was followed with the presence of my Charmer, flashing upon me all at once in a flood of brightness, sweetly dressed, tho' all unprepared for a journey, I trod air, and hardly thought myself a mortal.

Thou shalt judge of her dress, as, at the moment I first beheld her, she appeared to me, and as, upon a nearer observation, she really was. I am a Critic, thou knowest, in womens dresses. Many a one have I taught to dress, and helped to undress. But there is such a native elegance in this Lady, that she surpasses all that I could imagine surpassing. But then her person adorns what she wears, more than dress can adorn her; and that's her excellence.

Expect therefore a faint sketch of her admirable person with her dress.

Her wax-like flesh (for, after all, flesh and blood I think she is) by its delicacy and firmness, answers for the soundness of her health. Thou hast often
heard

heard me launch out in praise of her complexion. I never in my life beheld a skin so *illustriously* fair. The Lily and the driven Snow it is nonsense to talk of : Her Lawn and her Laces one might indeed compare to those : But what a whited wall would a woman appear to be, who had a complexion which would justify such unnatural comparisons ? But this Lady is all glowing, all charming flesh and blood ; yet so clear, that every meandering vein is to be seen in all the lovely parts of her which custom permits to be visible.

Thou hast heard me also describe the wavy Ringlets of her shining hair, needing neither art nor powder ; of itself an ornament, defying all other ornaments ; wantoning in and about a neck that is beautiful beyond description.

Her head-dress was a Brussels-lace mob, peculiarly adapted to the charming air and turn of her features. A sky-blue ribband illustrated that. But altho' the weather was somewhat sharp, she had not on either hat or hood ; for, besides that she loves to use herself hardily (by which means, and by a temperance truly exemplary, she is allowed to have given high health and vigour to an originally tender constitution) she seems to have intended to shew me, that she was determined not to stand to her appointment. O Jack ! that such a sweet girl should be a rogue !

Her morning-gown was a pale primrose-coloured paduasoy ; The cuffs and robings curiously embroidered by the fingers of this ever-charming Arachne, in a running pattern of violets, and their leaves ; the light in the flowers silver ; gold in the leaves. A pair of diamond snaps in her ears. A white handkerchief, wrought by the same inimitable fingers, concealed—O Belford ! what still more inimitable beauties did it not conceal !—And I saw, all the way we rode, the bounding heart (by its throbbing mo-

tions I saw it!) dancing beneath the charming umbrage.

Her ruffles were the same as her mob. Her apron a flowered lawn. Her coat white satten, quilted: Blue satten her shoes, braided with the same colour, without lace; for what need has the prettiest foot in the world of ornament? Neat buckles in them: And on her charming arms a pair of black velvet glove-like muffs, of her own invention; for she makes and gives fashions as she pleases—Her hands, velvet of themselves, thus uncovered the freer to be grasped by those of her adorer.

I have told thee what were my transports, when the undrawn bolt presented to me my long-expected goddess.—Her emotions were more sweetly feminine, after the first moments; for then the fire of her starry eyes began to sink into a less-dazzling languor. She trembled: Nor knew she how to support the agitations of a heart she had never found so ungovernable. She was even fainting, when I clasped her in my supporting arms. What a precious moment That! How near, how sweetly near, the throbbing partners!

By her dress, I saw, as I observed before, how unprepared she was for a journey; and not doubting her intention once more to disappoint me, I would have drawn her after me. Then began a contention the most vehement that ever I had with woman. It would pain thy friendly heart to be told the infinite trouble I had with her. I begged, I prayed; on my knees, yet in vain, I begged and prayed her to answer her own appointment: And had I not happily provided for such a struggle, knowing whom I had to deal with, I had certainly failed in my design; and as certainly would have accompanied her in, without thee and thy brethren: And who knows what might have been the consequence?

But

But my honest agent answering my signal, *(tho' not quite so soon as I expected,* in the manner thou knowest I had prescribed, They are coming! They are coming!—Fly, fly, my beloved creature, cried I, drawing my sword with a flourish, as if I would have slain half an hundred of the supposed intruders; and, seizing her trembling hands, I drew her after me so swiftly, that my feet, winged by Love, could hardly keep pace with *her* feet, agitated by Fear.— And so I became her Emperor.

I'll tell thee all, when I see thee: And thou shalt then judge of my difficulties, and of *her* perverseness; And thou wilt rejoice with me at my conquest over such a watchful and open-eyed charmer.

But seest thou not now (as I think I do) the wind-outstripping Fair-one flying *from* her Love to her Love?—Is there not such a game?—Nay, flying from friends she was resolved not to abandon, to the man she was determined not to go off with?—*The Sex! The Sex, all over!*—Charming contradiction!—Hah, hah, hah, hah!—I must here—I must here, lay down my pen, to hold my sides; for I must have my laugh out now the fit is upon me.

I BELIEVE—I believe—Hah, hah, hah!—I believe, Jack, my dogs conclude me mad: For here has one of them popt in, as if to see what ailed me; or whom I had with me. The whoreson caught the laugh, as he went out.—Hah, hah, hah!—An *im-pudent* dog!—O Jack, knewest thou my conceit; and were but thy laugh joined to mine, I believe it would hold me for an hour longer.

But, O my best-beloved Fair-one, repine not thou at the Arts by which thou suspectest thy fruitless vigilance has been over-watched.—Take care, that thou provokest not new ones, that may be still more worthy of thee. If once thy Emperor decrees thy fall,

fall, thou shalt greatly fall. Thou shalt have cause, if that come to pass which *may* come to pass (for why wouldest thou put off Marriage to so long a day, as till thou hadst reason to be convinced of my Reformation, dearest?) thou shalt have cause, never fear, to sit down more dissatisfied with thy Stars, than with thyself. And come the worst to the worst, glorious terms will I give thee. Thy garison, with general *Prudence* at the head, and governor *Watchfulness* bringing up the rear, shall be allowed to march out with all the honours due to so brave a resistance. And all thy Sex, and all mine, that hear of my stratagems, and of thy conduct, shall acknowledge the Fortrefs as nobly won, as defended.

Thou wilt not dare, methinks I hear thee say, to attempt to reduce such a goddess as This, to a standard unworthy of her excellencies. It is impossible, Lovelace, that thou shouldst intend to break thro' oaths and protestations so solemn.

That I did *not* intend it, is certain. That I *do* intend it, I cannot (my heart, my reverence for her, will not let me) say. But knowest thou not my aversion to the State of Shackles?—And is she not IN MY POWER?

And wilt thou, Lovelace, abuse that power, which?—

Which what, Belford?—Which I obtained not by her own consent, but *against* it.

But which thou never hadst obtained, had she not esteemed thee above all men.

And which I had never taken so much pains to obtain, had I not loved her above all women. So far upon a par, Jack! And, if thou pleadest Honour, ought not Honour to be mutual? If mutual, does it not imply mutual trust, mutual confidence? And what have I had of *that* from her to boast of?—Thou knowest the whole progress of our warfare:

For

For a warfare it has truly been ; and far, very far, from an amorous warfare too. Doubts, mistrusts, upbraidings, on her part : Humiliations the most abject, on mine. Obligated to assume such airs of Reformation, that every varlet of ye has been afraid I should reclaim in good earnest. And hast thou not thyself frequently observed to me, how awkwardly I returned to my usual gaiety, after I had been within a mile of her Father's garden-wall, altho' I had not seen her ?

Does she not deserve to pay for all this ?—To make an honest fellow look like an hypocrite ; what a vile thing is that !

Then thou knowest what a *false* little rogue she has been. How little conscience she has made of disappointing me. Hast thou not been a witness of my ravings, on this score ?—Have I not, in the height of them, vowed Revenge upon the faithless Charmer ?—And, if I *must* be forsworn, whether I answer her expectations, or follow my own inclinations ; and if the option be in my own power ; can I hesitate a moment which to chuse ?

Then, I fancy, by her circumspection, and her continual grief, that she *expects* some mischief from me. I don't care to disappoint any-body I have a value for.

But O the noble, the exalted creature ! Who can avoid hesitating when he thinks of an offence against her ? Who can but pity—

Yet, on the other hand, so loth at last to venture, tho' threatened to be forced into the nuptial fetters with a man, whom to look upon as a rival, is to disgrace myself !—So fullen, now she has ventured !—What title has *she* to pity ; and to a pity which her pride would make her disclaim ?

But I resolve not *any way*. I will see how *her* will works ; and how *my* will leads me on. I will give

the combatants fair play. And yet, every time I attend her, I find that she is less in *my* power; I more in *hers*.

Yet, a foolish little rogue! to forbid me to think of marriage till I am a reformed man! Till the Implacables of her family change their natures, and become placable!

It is true, when she was for making those conditions, she did not think, that, without *any*, she should *be cheated out of herself*; for so the dear fool, as thou mayst hear in its place, phrases it.

How it swells my pride, to have been able to outwit such a vigilant Charmer! I am taller by half a yard in my imagination than I was. I look down upon every-body now. Last night I was still more extravagant. I took off my hat, as I walked, to see if the Lace were not scorched, supposing it had brushed down a star; and, before I put it on again, in mere wantonness, and heart's ease, I was for buffeting the moon.

In short, my whole soul is joy. When I go to bed, I laugh myself asleep: And I awake either laughing or singing—Yet nothing *nearly* in view, neither—For why? *I am not yet reformed enough!*

I told thee at the time, if thou remembrest, how capable this restriction was, of being turned upon the over-scrupulous dear creature, could I once get her out of her Father's house; and were I disposed to punish her for her family's faults, and for the infinite trouble she herself had given me. Little thinks she, *that I have kept an account of both*: And that, when my heart is soft, and all her own, I can but turn to my *memoranda*, and harden myself at once.

O my Charmer, look to it! Abate of thy haughty airs! Value not thyself upon thy Sincerity, if thou art indifferent to me! I will not bear it *Now*. *Art thou not in my Power?*—Nor, if thou lovest me, think,

think, that the female affectation of denying thy Love, will avail thee *Now*, with a heart so proud and so jealous as mine?—Remember, moreover, that all thy family-sins are upon thy head!—

But, ah! Jack, when I see my Angel, when I am admitted to the presence of this radiant Beauty, what will become of all this vapouring?

But, be my end what it may, I am obliged, by thy penetration, Fair-one, to proceed by the Sap. *Fair and softly*. *A Wife at any time!* Marriage will be always in my power.

When put to the University, the same course of *initial Studies* will qualify the Yonker for the one Line or for the other. The *genius* ought to point out the future Lawyer, Divine, or Physician!—So the same cautious conduct, with such a vigilance, will do either for the *Wife*, or for the *No-wife*. When I reform, I'll marry. 'Tis time enough for the *one*, the *Lady* must say—For the *other*, say I!

But how I ramble!—This it is to be in such a situation, that I know not what to resolve upon.

I'll tell thee my *inclinations*, as I proceed. The *pro's* and the *con's* I'll tell thee: But being got too far from the track I set out in, I will close here. I may however write every day something, and send it as opportunity offers.

Regardless, nevertheless, I shall be, in all I write, of connexion, accuracy, or of any thing but of my own imperial will and pleasure.

LETTER XL.

MISS HOWE, TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Wednesday Night, April 12.

I Have your narrative, my dear. You are the same noble creature you ever were. Above disguise, above art, above attempting to extenuate a failing.

U. S.

The

The only family in the world, yours, surely, that could have driven such a Daughter upon such extremities.

But you must not be so very much too good for *them*, and for the *case*.

You lay the blame so properly and so unsparingly upon *your meeting him*, that nothing can be added to that subject by your worst enemies, were they to see what you have written.

I am not surprised, now I have read your narrative, that so bold, and so contriving a man—I am forced to break off—

❧ ❧

You stood it out much better and longer—Here again comes my bustling, jealous Mother!

❧ ❧

Don't be so angry at yourself. Did you not do for the best at the time? As to your first fault, *the answering his Letters*; it was almost incumbent upon you to assume the guardianship of such a family, when the Bravo of it had run riot, as he did; and brought himself into danger.

Except your Mother, who has no will of her own, have any of them common sense?—

Forgive me, my dear—Here is that stupid Uncle Antony of yours. A pragmatistical, conceited, positive—He came yesterday, in a fearful pucker, and puffed, and blowed, and stumped about our hall and parlour, while his message was carried up.

My Mother was dressing. These widows are as starched as the old bachelors. She would not see him in a dishabille for the world—*What can she mean by it?*

His errand was to set her against you, and to shew their determined rage on your going away. The issue proved too evidently that this was the principal end of his visit.

The odd creature desired to speak with her alone.

I am

I am not used to such exceptions whenever any visits are made to my Mother.

When she was *prim'd out*, down she came to him. They locked themselves in. The two positive heads were put together—close together I suppose; for I listened, but could hear nothing distinctly, tho' they both seemed full of their subject.

I had a good mind, once or twice, to have made them open the door. Could I have been sure of keeping but tolerably my temper, I would have *demanded* admittance. But I was afraid, if I had obtained it, that I should have forgot it was my Mother's house, and been for turning him out of it. To come to rave against and abuse my dearest, dearest, faultless friend! and the ravings to be encouraged, and perhaps joined in, in order to justify themselves; the one for contributing to drive that dear friend out of her Father's house; the other for refusing her a temporary asylum, till the Reconciliation could have been effected, which her dutiful heart was set upon; and which it would have become the love which my Mother had ever pretended for you, to have mediated for—Could I have had patience!

The *issue*, as I said, shewed what the errand was—Its first appearance, after the old fusty fellow was marched off [*You must excuse me, my dear*] was in a kind of gloomy, Harlowe-like reservedness in my Mother, which, upon a few resenting flirts of mine, was followed by a rigorous prohibition of correspondence.

This put us, you may suppose, upon terms not the most agreeable. I desired to know, If I were prohibited *dreaming* of you?—For, my dear, you have all my sleeping, as well as waking hours.

I can easily allow for your correspondence with your wretch at first (and yet your motives were excellent) by the effect this prohibition has upon me; since,
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CLARISSA HARLOWE. 297

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if possible, it has made me love you better than before; and I am more desirous than ever of corresponding with you.

But I have nevertheless a much more laudable motive—I should think myself the unworthiest of creatures, could I be brought to slight a dear friend, and such a meritorious one, in her distress.—I would die first.—And so I told my Mother. And I have desired her not to watch me in my retired hours, nor to insist upon my lying with her constantly, which she now does more earnestly than ever. 'Twere better, I told her, that the Harlowe-Betty were borrowed to be set over me.

Mr. Hickman, who greatly honours you, has, unknown to me, interposed so warmly in your favour with my Mother, that it makes for him no small merit with me.

I cannot, at present, write to every particular, unless I would be in *set* defiance.—Teaze, teaze, teaze, for ever! The same thing, tho' answered fifty times over, in every hour to be repeated.—Lord bless me! what a life must my poor Father.—But let me remember to whom I am writing.

If this ever-active, ever mischievous monkey of a man, this Lovelace, contrived as you suspect.—But here comes my Mother again.—Ay, stay a little longer, my Mamma, if you please—I can but be suspected! I can but be chidden for making you wait; and chidden I am sure to be, whether I do or not, in the way you, my good Mamma, are *Antony'd* into.

Bless me!—how impatient she is!—How she thunders at the door!—This moment, Madam!—How came I to double-lock myself in!—What have I done with the key?—Duce take the key!—Dear Madam! You flutter one so!

You may believe, my dear, that I took care of
: my

• my Papers before I opened the door. We have
 • had a charming dialogue—She flung from me in
 • a passion—

So—what's now to be done?—Sent for down in a
 very peremptory manner, I assure you.—What an
 incoherent Letter will you have, when I can get it to
 you! But now I know where to send it, Mr. Hick-
 man shall find me a messenger. Yet, if he be detected,
 poor soul, he will be *Harlowed-off*, as well as his
meek mistress.

Thursday, April 13.

I HAVE this moment your Continuation-Letter.
 And am favoured, at present, with the absence of my
 Argus-eyed Mother.—

Dear Creature!—I can account for all your diffi-
 culties. A young Lady of your delicacy!—And
 with such a man!—I must be brief.—

The man's a fool, my dear, with all his pride, and
 with all his complaisance, and *affected regards to your*
injunctions. Yet his ready inventions—

Sometimes I think you should go to Lady Betty's.
 —I know not what to advise you to.—I *should*, if
 you were not so intent upon reconciling yourself to
 your relations. Yet they are implacable. You can
 have no hopes from them. Your Uncle's errand to
 my Mother may convince you of that; and if you
 have an Answer to your Letter to your Sister, that
 will confirm you, I dare say.

You need not to have been afraid of asking me,
 Whether, upon reading your narrative, I thought any
 extenuation could lie for what you have done. I have,
 as above, before I had your question, told you my
 mind as to that.—And I repeat, that I think, your
provocations and inducements considered, you are free
 from blame: At least, the freest, that ever young
 creature was who took such a step.

But you took it not.—You were driven on one side,
 and,

and, possibly, *tricked on the other*.—If any woman on earth shall be circumstanced as you were, and shall hold out so long as you did against her persecutors on one hand, and her seducer on the other, I will forgive her for all the rest of her conduct, be it what it will.

All your acquaintance, you may suppose, talk of nobody but you. Some indeed bring your admirable character for a plea against you: But nobody does, or *can*, acquit your Father and Uncles.

Every-body seems apprised of your Brother's and Sister's motives. Your flight is, no doubt, the very thing they aimed to drive you to, by the various attacks they made upon you; unhoping (as they must do all the time) the success of their schemes in Solmes's behalf. They knew, that if once you were restored to favour, the suspended Love of your Father and Uncles, like a river breaking down a temporary obstruction, would return with double force; and that then you would expose and triumph over all their arts.—And now, I hear, they *enjoy* their successful malice.

Your Father is all rage and violence. He ought, I am sure, to turn his rage inward. All your family accuse you of acting with *deep Art*; and are put upon supposing that you are actually *every hour exulting over them*, with your man, in the success of it.

They all pretend now, that your trial of Wednesday was to be the last.

Your Advantage would indeed, my Mother owns, have been taken of your yielding, if you had yielded. But had you not been to be prevailed upon, they would have given up their scheme, and taken your promise for renouncing Lovelace—Believe them who will!

They own, however, that a Minister was to be present—Mr. Solmes was to be at hand—And your Father was previously to try his authority over you,

but

in

in order to make you sign the Settlements.—All of it a romantic contrivance of your wild-headed foolish Brother, I make no doubt. Is it likely, that he and Bell would have given way to your Restoration to favour, supposing it in their power to hinder it, on any other terms than those their hearts had been so long set upon?

How they took your flight, when they found it out, may be better supposed than described.

Your Aunt Hervey it seems was the first that went down to the Ivy Summer-house in order to acquaint you that their search was over. Betty followed her; and they not finding you there, went on towards the Cascade, according to a hint of yours.

Returning by the garden-door, they met a servant [*They don't say, it was that Joseph Leman; but it is very likely that it was he*] running, as he said, from pursuing Mr. Lovelace (a great hedge-stake in his hand, and out of breath) to alarm the family.

If it were this fellow, and if he were employed in the double agency of cheating them, and cheating you, what shall we think of the wretch you are with?

—Run away from him, my dear, if so—No matter to whom—or marry him, if you cannot.

Your Aunt and all your family were accordingly alarmed by this fellow—*evidently when too late for pursuit*. They got together, and, when a *posse*, ran to the place of interview; and some of them as far as to the tracks of the chariot-wheels, without stopping. And having heard the man's tale upon the spot, a general lamentation, a mutual upbraiding, and rage, and grief, were echoed from the different persons, according to their different tempers and conceptions. And they returned like fools as they went.

Your Brother, at first, ordered horses and armed men to be got ready for a pursuit. Solmes and your Uncle Tony were to be of the party. But your
Mother

Mother and your Aunt Hervey dissuaded them from it, for fear of adding evil to evil; not doubting but Lovelace had taken measures to support himself in what he had done; and especially when the servant declared, that he saw you run with him as fast as you could set foot to ground; and that there were several armed men on horseback at a small distance off.

My Mother's absence was owing to her suspicion, that the Knollys's were to assist in our correspondence. She made them a visit upon it. *She does every thing at once.* And they have promised, that no more Letters shall be left there, without her knowledge.

But Mr. Hickman has engaged one Filmer, a husbandman, in the lane we call Finch-lane, near us, to receive them. Thither you will be pleased to direct yours, under cover, to Mr. John Soberton; and Mr. Hickman himself will call for them there; and there shall leave mine. It goes against me too, to make him so useful to me.—He looks already so proud upon it!—I shall have him (who knows?) give himself airs.—He had best consider, that the favour he has been long aiming at, may put him into a very dangerous, a very ticklish situation. He that can oblige, may disoblige—Happy for some people not to have it in their power to offend!

I will have patience, if I can, for a while, to see if these bustlings in my Mother will subside—But upon my word, I will not long bear this usage.

Sometimes I am ready to think, that my Mother carries it thus on purpose to tire me out, and to make me the sooner marry. If I find it to be so, and that Hickman, in order to make a merit with me, is in the low plot, I will never bear him in my sight.

Plotting wretch, as I doubt your man is, I wish to heaven, that you were married, that you might brave them

them all; and not be forced to hide yourself, and be hurried from one inconvenient place to another. I charge you, omit not to lay hold on any handsome opportunity that may offer for that purpose.

Here again comes my Mother—

We look mighty glum upon each other, I can tell you. She had not best *Harlowe* me at this rate—I won't bear it.

I have a vast deal to write. I know not what to write first. Yet my mind is full, and ready to run over.

I am got into a private corner of the garden, to be out of her way.—Lord help these Mothers!—Do they think they can prevent a Daughter's writing, or doing any-thing she has a mind to do, by suspicion, watchfulness, and scolding?—They had better place a confidence in one by half—A generous mind scorns to abuse a generous confidence.

You have a nice, a very nice part to act with this wretch—Who yet has, I think, but one plain path before him. I pity you—But you must make the best of the lot you have been forced to draw. Yet I see your difficulties.—But if he do not offer to abuse your confidence, I would have you *seem* at least to place some in him.

If you think not of marrying soon, I approve of your resolution to fix somewhere out of his reach: And if he know not where to find you, so much the better. Yet I verily believe, they would force you back, could they but come at you, if they were not afraid of him.

I think, by all means, you should demand of both your Trustees to be put in possession of your own Estate. Mean time I have Sixty guineas at your service. I beg you will command them. Before they are gone, I'll take care you shall be further sup-

supplied. I don't think you'll have a shilling or a shilling's worth of your own from your relations, unless you extort it from them.

As they believe you went away by your own consent, they are, it seems, equally surprised and glad that you have left your jewels and money behind you, and have contrived for cloaths so ill. Very little likelihood this shews of their answering your requests.

Indeed every one who knows not what I now know, must be at a loss to account for your *flight*, as they will call it. And how, my dear, can one report it with any tolerable advantage to you?—To say, you *did not intend it* when you met him, who will believe it?—To say, that a person of your known steadiness and punctilio was *over-persuaded* when you gave him the meeting, how will that sound?—To say you were *tricked out of yourself*, and people were to give credit to it, how disreputable!—And while *unmarried*, and yet *with him*, the man a man of such a character, what would it not lead a censuring world to think?

I want to see how you put it in your Letter for your cloaths.

As you may depend upon all the little spiteful things they can offer, instead of sending what you write for, pray accept the sum I tender. What will Seven guineas do?—And I will find a way to send you also any of my cloaths and linen for present supply. I beg, my dearest Clarissa, that you will not put your Anna Howe upon a foot with Lovelace, in refusing to accept of my offer. If you do not oblige me, I shall be apt to think, that you rather incline to be obliged to *him*, than to favour *me*. And if I find this, I shall not know how to reconcile it with your delicacy in other respects.

Pray inform me of every thing that passes between you

you and him. My cares for you (however needless, from your own prudence) make me wish you to continue to be very minute. If any-thing occur that you would tell me of if I were present, fail not to put it down in writing, altho', from your natural diffidence, it should not appear to you altogether so worthy of your pen, or of my knowing. A stander-by may see more of the game than one that plays. Great consequences, like great folks, are generally attended, and even *made* great, by small causes, and little incidents.

Upon the whole, I do not now think it is in your power to dismiss him when you please. I apprised you beforehand that it would not. I repeat therefore, that were I you, I would at least *seem* to place some confidence in him. So long as he is decent, you may. Very visibly observable, to such delicacy as yours, must be that behaviour in him, which will make him unworthy of *some* confidence.

Your Relations, according to what old Antony says to my *Mother*, and *she* to *me* (by way of threatening, that you will not gain your supposed ends upon them by your flight) seem to expect, that you will throw yourself into Lady Betty's protection; and that she will offer to mediate for you: And they vow, that they will never hearken to any terms of accommodation that shall come from that quarter. They might speak out, and say, from *any* quarter; for I dare aver, that your Brother and Sister will not let them cool—At least, till their Uncles have made such dispositions, and perhaps your Father too, as they would have them make.

As this Letter will apprize you of an alteration in the place to which you must direct your next, I send it by a friend of Mr. Hickman, who may be depended upon. He has business in the neighbourhood of Mrs. Sorlings; and he knows her. He will

return to Mr. Hickman this night; and bring back any Letter you shall have ready to send, or can get ready. It is moon-light. He'll not mind waiting for you. I chuse not to send by any of Mr. Hickman's servants—at present, however. Every hour is now, or may be, important; and may make an alteration in your resolutions necessary.

I hear at this instant, my Mother calling about her, and putting every-body into motion. She will soon, I suppose, make *me* and my employment the subjects of her inquiry.

Adieu, my dear. May heaven preserve you, and restore you with honour as unsullied as your mind, to

Your ever-affectionate

ANNA HOWE.

LETTER XLI.

Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, To Miss HOWE.

Thursday Afternoon, April 13.

I Am infinitely concerned, my ever-dear and ever-kind friend, that I am the sad occasion of the displeasure between your Mother and you.—How many persons have I made unhappy!

Had I not to console myself, that my error is not owing to wicked precipitation, I should be the most miserable of all creatures. As it is, I am enough punished in *the loss of my character*, more valuable to me than my life; and in the *cruel doubts and perplexities* which, conflicting with my hopes, and each getting the victory by turns, harrow up my soul between them.

I think, however, that you should obey your Mother; and decline a correspondence with me; at least for the present. Take care how you fall into my error; for That *began with carrying on a prohibited*

bited correspondence; a correspondence which I thought it in my power to discontinue at pleasure. My talent is scribbling, and I the readier fell into this freedom, as I found delight in writing; having motives too, which I thought laudable; and, at one time, the permission of all my friends, to write to him (a).

Yet as to this correspondence, what hurt could arise from it, if your Mother could be prevailed upon to permit it to be continued?—So much prudence and discretion as you have; and you, in writing to me, lying under no temptation of following so bad an example, as I have set—My Letters too occasionally filled with self-accusation.

I thank you, my dear, most cordially I thank you, for your kind offers. You may be assured, that I will sooner be beholden to you, than to anybody living. To Mr. Lovelace the last. Do not therefore think, that by declining your favours I have an intention to lay myself under obligation to him.

I am willing to hope (notwithstanding what you write) that my friends will send me my little money, together with my cloaths. They are too considerate, some of them, at least, to permit, that I should be put to such *low* difficulties. Perhaps, they will not be in haste to oblige me. But if not, I cannot yet want. I believe you think, I must not dispute with Mr. Lovelace the expences of the road and lodgings, till I can get to a fixed abode. But I hope soon to put an end even to those sort of obligations.

Small hopes indeed of a Reconciliation from your account of my Uncle's visit to your Mother, in order to set her against an almost-friendless creature whom once he loved! *But is it not my duty to try for it?* Ought I to widen my error by obstinacy and resentment, because of *their* resentment; which must appear reasonable to them, as they suppose my flight

(a) Vol. i. p. 16, 17.

premeditated; and as they are made to believe, that I am capable of triumphing *in it*, and *over them*, with the *man they hate*? When I have done all in my power to restore myself to their favour, I shall have the less to reproach myself with.

These considerations make me waver about following your advice, in relation to Marriage; and the rather, as he is so full of complaisance with regard to my former conditions, which he calls my *Injunctions*. Nor can I now, that my friends, as you inform me, have so strenuously declared *against accepting of the mediation of the Ladies of Mr. Lovelace's family*, put myself into their protection, unless I am resolved to give up all hopes of a Reconciliation with my own.

Yet if any happy introduction *could* be thought of to effect this desirable purpose, how shall terms be proposed to my Father, while this man is with me, or near me? On the other hand, should they in his absence get me back by force (and this, you are of opinion, they would attempt to do, but in fear of him) how will their severest acts of compulsion be justified by my flight from them?—Mean while, to what censures, as you remind me, do I expose myself while he and I are together, and unmarried!—Yet (Can I with patience ask the question?) *is it in my power*?—O my dear Miss Howe! And am I so reduced, as that, to save the poor remains of my reputation in the world's eye, I must *watch the gracious motion* from this man's lips?

Were my Cousin Morden in England, all might still perhaps be determined happily.

If no other mediation than his can be procured to set on foot the wished-for Reconciliation, and if my situation with Mr. Lovelace alter not in the interim, I must endeavour to keep myself in a state of independence till he arrivè, that I may be at liberty to govern myself by his advice and direction.

I will acquaint you, as you desire, with all that passes between Mr. Lovelace and me. Hitherto I have not discovered any-thing in his behaviour that is *very* exceptionable. Yet I cannot say, that I think the respect he shews me, an easy, unrestrained, and natural respect; altho' I can hardly tell where the fault is.

But he has doubtless an arrogant and incroaching spirit. Nor is he so polite as his Education, and other advantages, might have made one expect him to be. He seems, in short, to be one, who has always had too much of his own will, to study to accommodate himself to that of others.

As to the placing of some confidence in him, I shall be as ready to take your advice in this particular, as in all others, and as he will be to deserve it. But *tricked away* as I was by him, not only *against my judgment, but my inclination*, can he, or *any-body*, expect, that I should immediately treat him with complaisance, as if I acknowledged obligation to him for carrying me away?—If I did, must he not either think me a vile dissembler *before* he gained that point, or *afterwards*?

Indeed, indeed, my dear, I could tear my hair, on reconsidering what you write (as to the probability that the dreaded Wednesday was more dreaded than it needed to be) to think, that I should be thus tricked by this man; and that, in all likelihood, thro' his vile agent Joseph Leman. So premeditated and elaborate a wickedness as it must be!—Must I not, *with such a man*, be wanting *to myself*, if I were not jealous and vigilant?—Yet what a life to live for a spirit *so open*, and naturally *so unsuspicious*, as mine?

I am obliged to Mr. Hickman for the assistance he is so kindly ready to give to our correspondence. He is so *little likely* to make to himself an additional merit with the *Daughter* upon it, that I shall

be very sorry, if he risk any-thing with the *Mother* by it.

I am now in a state of Obligation: So must rest satisfied with whatever I cannot help. Whom have I the power, once so precious to me, of obliging?—What I mean, my dear, is, that I ought, perhaps, to expect, that my influences over you are weakened by my indiscretion. Nevertheless, I will not, if I can help it, *desert myself*, nor give up the privilege you used to allow me, of telling you what I think of such parts of your conduct as I may not approve.

You must permit me therefore (severe as your Mother is against an undefining offender) to say, that I think your liveliness to her inexcusable—To pass over, for this time, what nevertheless concerns me not a little, the free treatment you almost *indiscriminately* give to my relations.

If you will not, for your *duty's sake*, forbear your tauntings and impatience, let me beseech you, that you will for *mine*:—Since otherwise, your Mother may apprehend, that my example, like a leaven, is working itself into the mind of her beloved Daughter. And may not such an apprehension give her an irreconcilable displeasure against me?

I inclose the copy of my Letter to my Sister, which you are desirous to see. You will observe, that altho' I have not demanded my Estate in form, and of my Trustees, yet that I have hinted at leave to retire to it. How joyfully would I keep my word, if they would accept of the offer I renew?—It was not proper, I believe you will think, on many accounts, to own that I was carried off against my inclination. I am, my dearest friend,

Your ever-obliged and affectionate

CL. HARLOWE.

L E T-

CLARISSA HARLOWE. 311

LETTER XLII.

To Miss ARABELLA HARLOWE.

[Inclosed to Miss Howe in the preceding.]

My dear Sister,

St. Albans, Apr. 11.

I HAVE, I confess, been guilty of an action which carries with it a rash and undutiful appearance. And I should have thought it an inexcusable one, had I been used with less severity than I have been of late; and had I not had too great reason to apprehend, that I was to be made a sacrifice to a man I could not bear to think of. But what is done, is done—Perhaps I could wish it had not; and that I had trusted to the relenting of my dear and honoured parents.—Yet This from no other motives, but those of duty to them.—To whom I am ready to return (if I may not be permitted to retire to *The Grove*) on conditions which I before offered to comply with.

Nor shall I be in any sort of dependence upon the person by whose means I have taken this *truly reluctant step*, inconsistent with any reasonable engagement I shall enter into, if I am not farther precipitated. Let me not have it to say, Now, at this important crisis! that I have a Sister, but not a Friend in that Sister. My Reputation, dearer to me than life (whatever you may imagine from the step I have taken) is suffering. A little lenity will, even yet, in a great measure, restore it, and make that pass for a temporary misunderstanding only, which otherwise will be a stain as durable as life, upon a creature who has already been treated with great *unkindness*, to use no harsher a word.

For your own sake therefore, for my Brother's sake, by whom (I *must* say) I have been thus precipitated, and for all the Family's sake, aggravate not my fault, if, on recollecting every-thing, you think it one;

nor by widening the unhappy difference, expose a Sister for ever—Prays

Your affectionate

CL. HARLOWE.

I shall take it for a very great favour, to have my cloaths directly sent me, together with Fifty guineas, which you will find in my escritoire (of which I inclose the key); as also the Divinity and Miscellany classes of my little Library; and, if it be thought fit, my Jewels—Directed for me, To be left, till called for, at Mr. Osgood's, near Soho-Square.

L E T T E R XLIII.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;

MR. Lovelace, in continuation of his last Letter (No. xxxix.) gives an account to his Friend (pretty much to the same effect with the Lady's) of all that passed between them at the Inns, in the journey, and till their fixing at Mrs. Sorlings's. To avoid repetition, those passages in his Narrative are only extracted, which will serve to embellish hers; to open his views; or to display the humorous talent he was noted for.

At their alighting at the Inn at St. Albans on Monday night, thus he writes.

The people who came about us, as we alighted, seemed, by their jaw-fallen faces, and goggling eyes, to wonder at beholding a charming young Lady, majesty in her air and aspect, so composedly dressed, yet with features so *dis*-composed, come off a journey which had made the cattle smoke, and the servants sweat. I read their curiosity in their faces, and my Beloved's uneasiness in hers. She cast a conscious glance as she alighted, upon her habit, which was

no habit, and repulsively, as I may say, quitting my assisting hand, hurried into the house. * * *

Ovid was not a greater master of metamorphoses than thy friend. To the mistress of the house I instantly changed her into a Sister, brought off by surprize from a near Relation's (where she had wintered) to prevent her marrying a confounded Rake, [I love always to go as near the truth as I can] whom her Father and Mother, her elder Sister, and all her loving Uncles, Aunts, and Cousins, abhorred. This accounted for my Charmer's expected sullens; for her displeasure when she was to join me again, were it to hold; for her unsuitable dress upon the road; and, at the same time, gave her a proper and seasonable assurance of my honourable views.

Upon the debate between the Lady and him, and particularly upon that part where she upbraids him with putting a young creature upon making a sacrifice of her Duty and Conscience, he writes—

All these, and still more mortifying things, she said.

I heard her in silence. But when it came to my turn, I pleaded, I argued, I answered her, as well as I could.—And when humility would not do, I raised my voice, and suffered my eye to sparkle with anger; hoping to take advantage of that sweet cowardice which is so amiable in the Sex, and to which my victory over this proud Beauty is principally owing.

She was not intimidated, however; and was going to rise upon me in her temper; and would have broken in upon my defence. But when a man talks to a woman upon such subjects, let her be ever so much in *Alt*, 'tis strange, if he cannot throw out a Tub to the Whale;—that is to say, if he cannot divert her from resenting one bold thing, by uttering

two

two or three full as bold; but for which more favourable interpretations will lie.

To that part, where she tells him of the difficulty she made to correspond with him at first, thus he writes.

Very true, my precious!—And innumerable have been the difficulties thou hast made me struggle with. But one day thou mayest wish, that thou hadst spared this boast; as well as those other pretty haughtinesses, ‘That thou didst not reject Solmes for my sake: That my glory, if I valued myself upon carrying thee off, was *thy* shame: That I have more merit with *myself*, than with thee, or any-body else.’ [*What a conceit she makes me, Jack!*] That thou wishest thyself in thy Father’s house again, *whatever were to be the consequence.*—If I forgive thee, Charmer, for these hints, for these reflections, for these wishes, for these contempts, I am not the Lovelace I have been reputed to be; and that thy treatment of me shews that thou thinkest I am.

In short, her whole Air throughout this debate, expressed a majestic kind of indignation, which implied a believed superiority of talents over the person to whom she spoke.

Thou hast heard me often expatiate upon the pitiful figure a man must make, whose Wife *has*, or *believes* she has, more sense than himself. A thousand reasons could I give, why I ought not to think of marrying Miss Clarissa Harlowe: At least till I can be sure, that she loves me with the preference I must expect from a Wife.

I begin to stagger in my resolutions. Ever averse as I was to the Hymeneal shackles, how easily will old prejudices recur!—Heaven give me the heart to be honest to my Clarissa!—There’s a prayer, Jack! If I should not be heard, what a sad thing would that be,

be, for the most admirable of women!—Yet, as I do not often trouble Heaven with my prayers, who knows but this may be granted?

But there lie before me such charming difficulties, such scenery for intrigue, for stratagem, for enterprize—What a horrible thing that my talents point all that way!—When I know what is honourable and just; and would almost wish to be honest?—*Almost*, I say; for such a varlet am I, that I cannot altogether wish it, for the soul of me!—Such a triumph over the whole Sex, if I can subdue this Lady!—My maiden vow, as I may call it!—For did not the Sex begin with me?—And does this Lady spare me?—Thinkest thou, Jack, that I should have spared my Rosebud, had I been set at defiance thus?—Her Grandmother besought me, at first, *to spare her Rosebud*; and when a girl is put, or puts herself, into a man's power, what can he wish for *further*? while I always considered opposition and resistance as a challenge to do my worst (*a*).

Why, why, will the dear creature take such pains to appear all ice to me?—Why will she, by *her* pride, awaken *mine*?—Hast thou not seen, in the above, how contemptibly she treats me?—What have I not suffered *for* her, and even *from* her?—Ought I to bear being told, that she will despise me, if I value myself above that odious Solmes?

Then she cuts me short in all my ardors. To *voto fidelity*, is, by a cursed turn upon me, to shew, that there is reason, in my own opinion, for doubt of it.—The very same reflection upon me, once before (*b*). In my power, or out of my power, all one to this Lady.—So, Belford, my poor vows are crammed down my throat, before they can well rise to my lips. And what can a Lover say to his Mistress, if she will neither let him lye nor swear?

(*a*) See Vol. i. p. 223.

(*b*) Ibid. p. 378.

One little piece of artifice I had recourse to: When she pushed so hard for me to leave her, I made a request to her, upon a condition she could not refuse; and pretended as much gratitude upon her granting it, as if it were a favour of the last consequence.

And what was This? but to promise what she had before promised, 'Never to marry any other man, while I am living, and single, unless I should give her cause for high disgust against me.' This, you know, was promising nothing, because she could be offended at any time; and was to be the sole judge of the offence. But it shewed her, how reasonable and just my expectations were; and that I was no Incroacher.

She consented; and asked, What security I expected?

Her Word only.

She gave me her Word: But I besought her excuse for sealing it: And in the same moment (since to have waited for consent, would have been asking for a denial) saluted her. And, believe me, or not, but, as I hope to live, it was the first time I had the courage to touch her charming lips with mine. And This I tell thee, Belford, that That single pressure (as modestly put too, as if I were as much a virgin as herself, that she might not be afraid of me another time) delighted me more than ever I was delighted by the *Ultimatum* with any other woman.—So precious does awe, reverence, and apprehended prohibition, make a favour!

And now, Belford, I am only afraid, that I shall be too cunning; for she does not at present talk enough for me. I hardly know what to make of the dear creature yet.

I topt the Brother's part on Monday night before the Landlady at St. Albans; asking my Sister's pardon

don for carrying her off so unprepared for a journey; prated of the joy my Father and Mother, and all our friends, would have on receiving her; and This with so many circumstances, that I perceived, by a look she gave me, that went thro' my very reins, that I had gone too far. I apologized for it indeed when alone; but I could not penetrate for the soul of me, whether I made the matter better or worse by it.

But I am of too frank a nature: My success, and the joy I have because of the jewel I am half in possession of, has not only unlocked my bosom, but left the door quite open.

This is a confounded fly Sex. Would she but speak out, as I do—But I must learn reserves of her.

She must needs be unprovided of money: But has too much pride to accept of any from me. I would have had her to go to town [*To town, if possible, must I get her to consent to go*] in order to provide herself with the richest of silks which That can afford. But neither is this to be assented to. And yet, as my intelligencer acquaints me, her implacable relations are resolved to distress her all they can.

These wretches have been most gloriously raving, ever since her flight; and still, thank Heaven, continue to rave; and will, I hope, for a twelvemonth to come. Now, at last, it is my Day!

Bitterly do they regret, that they permitted her poultry-visits, and garden-walks, which gave her the opportunity to effect an escape which they suppose preconcerted. For, as to her dining in the Ivy-bower, they had a cunning design to answer upon her in that permission, as Betty told Joseph her Lover (a).

They lost, they say, an excellent pretence for confining her *more* closely on my threatening to rescue her, if they offered to carry her against her will to

(a) See p. 230.

old Antony's moated house (*a*). For this, as I told thee at the Hart, and as I once hinted to the dear creature herself (*b*), they had it in deliberation to do; apprehending, that I might attempt to carry her off, either with or without her consent, on some one of those connived-at excursions.

But here my honest Joseph, who gave me the information, was of admirable service to me. I had taught him to make the Harlowes believe, that I was as communicative to my servants, as their stupid James was to Joseph (*c*): Joseph, as they supposed, by tampering with Will (*d*), got at all my secrets, and was acquainted with all my motions: And having also undertaken to watch all those of his young Lady (*e*), the wife family were secure; and so was my Beloved; and so was I.

I once had it in my head (and I hinted it to thee (*f*) in a former) in case such a step should be necessary, to attempt to carry her off by surprize from the Woodhouse; as it is remote from the dwelling-house. This, had I attempted, I should certainly have effected, by the help of the Confraternity: And it would have been an action worthy of us All. — But Joseph's Conscience, as he called it, stood in my way; for he thought, it must have been known to be done by his connivance. I could, I dare say, have overcome this scruple, *as easily as I did many of his others*, had I not depended, at one time upon her meeting me at a midnight or late hour [And, if she had, she never would have gone back]; at other times, upon the cunning family's doing my work for me, equally against their knowledge or their wills.

(*a*) See p. 143 — 146. 166.

(*b*) See p. 144. — See also p. 217.

(*c*) See p. 226. 230.

(*d*) This will be farther explained in Letter liii. of this volume.

(*e*) See Vol. i. p. 192, 193. 227, 228.

(*f*) See Vol. i. p. 229.

For well I knew, that James and Arabella were determined never to leave off their foolish trials and provocations, till, by tiring her out, they had either made her Solmes's Wife, or guilty of some such rashness as should throw her for ever out of the favour of both her Uncles; though they had too much malice in their heads to intend service to me by their persecutions of her.

L E T T E R XLIV.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;

In Continuation.

I Obligated the dear creature highly, I could perceive, by bringing Mrs. Greme to attend her, and to suffer that good woman's recommendation of lodgings to take place, on her refusal to go to *The Lawn*.

She must believe all my views to be honourable, when I had provided for her no particular lodgings, leaving it to her choice, whether she would go to M. Hall, to The Lawn, to London, or to either of the Dowagers of my family.

She was visibly pleased with my motion of putting Mrs. Greme into the chaise with her, and riding on horseback myself.

Some people would have been apprehensive of what might pass between her and Mrs. Greme. But as all my relations either know or believe the justice of my intentions by her, I was in no pain on that account; and the less, as I have been always above hypocrisy, or wishing to be thought better than I am. And indeed, what occasion has a man to be an Hypocrite, who has hitherto found his views upon the Sex better answered, for his being known to be a Rake?—Why, even my Beloved here denied not to correspond with me, tho' her friends had taught her to think me a Libertine.—Who then would be trying a new and worse character?

And then Mrs. Grene is a pious matron, and would not have been biased against the truth on any consideration. She used formerly, while there were any hopes of my Reformation, to pray for me. She hardly continues the good custom, I doubt; for her worthy Lord makes no scruple, occasionally, to rave against me to man, woman, and child, as they come in his way. He is very undutiful, as thou knowest. Surely, I may say so; since all duties are reciprocal. But for Mrs. Grene, *poor woman!* when my Lord has the gout, and is at The Lawn, and the Chaplain not to be found, she prays by him, or reads a chapter to him in the Bible, or some other good book.

Was it not therefore right, to introduce such a good sort of woman to the dear creature; and to leave them, without reserve, to their own talk?—And very busy in talk I saw they were, as they rode; and *felt* it too; for most charmingly glowed my cheeks.

I hope I shall be honest, I once more say: But as we frail mortals are not our own masters at all times, I must endeavour to keep the dear creature unapprehensive, until I can get her to *our acquaintance's in London*, or to some *other safe place there*. Should I, in the interim, give her the least room for suspicion; or offer to restrain her; she can make her appeals to strangers, and call the country in upon me; and, perhaps, throw herself upon her Relations on their own terms. And were I now to lose her, how unworthy should I be to be the Prince and Leader of such a Confraternity as ours!—How unable to look up among men! or to shew my face among women!

As things at present stand, she dare not own, that she went off against her own consent; and I have taken care to make all the *Implacables* believe, that she escaped *with* it.

She has received an Answer from Miss Howe, to the Letter written to her from St. Albans (a).

Whatever are the contents, I know not; but she was drowned in tears on the perusal of it. And I am the sufferer.

Miss Howe is a charming creature too; but confoundedly smart and spiritfui. I am a good deal afraid of her. Her Mother can hardly keep her in. I must continue to play off *old Antony*, by my *honest Joseph*, upon That Mother, in order to manage That Daughter, and oblige my Beloved to an absolute dependence upon myself (b).

Mrs. Howe is impatient of contradiction. So is Miss. A young Lady who is sensible that she has all the maternal requisites herself, to be under maternal controul;—fine ground for a man of intrigue to build upon!—A Mother over-notable; a Daughter over-sensible; and their Hickman, who is—over-neither; but merely a passive—

Only that I have an object still more desirable!—

Yet how unhappy, that these two young Ladies lived so near each other, and are so well acquainted! Else how charmingly might I have managed them both!

But *one* man cannot have every woman worth having—Pity tho'—when the man is such a *VERY* clever fellow!

LETTER XLV.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;

In Continuation.

NEVER was there such a pair of scribbling Lovers as we;—yet perhaps whom it so much concerns to keep from each other what each writes. She *won't* have any-thing else to do. I *would*, if she'd

(a) Letter xxxii.

(b) Vol. i. p. 193.

let me. I am not reformed enough for a Husband. — *Patience is a virtue*, Lord M. says. *Slow and sure*, is another of his sentences. If I had not a great deal of that virtue, I should not have waited the Harlowes own time of ripening into execution my plots upon Themselves, and upon their Goddess-Daughter.

My Beloved has been writing to her saucy friend, I believe, all that has befallen her, and what has passed between us hitherto. She will possibly have fine subjects for her pen, if she be as minute as I am.

I would not be so barbarous, as to permit old Antony to set Mrs. Howe against her, did I not dread the consequences of the correspondence between the two young Ladies. So lively the one, so vigilant, so prudent both, who would not wish to outwit such girls, and to be able to twirl them round his finger?

My Charmer has written to her Sister for her Cloaths, for some Gold, and for some of her Books. What Books can tell her more than she knows? But I can. So she had better study me.

She may write. She must be obliged to me at last, with all her pride. Miss Howe indeed will be ready enough to supply her; but I question, whether she can do it without her Mother, who is as covetous as the grave. And my agent's agent, old Antony, has already given the Mother a hint which will make her jealous of *pecuniaries*.

Besides, if Miss Howe has money by her, I can put her Mother upon borrowing it of her: Nor blame me, Jack, for contrivances that have their foundation in generosity. Thou knowest my spirit; and that I should be proud to lay an obligation upon my Charmer to the amount of half, nay, to the whole of my Estate. Lord M. has more for me than I can ever wish for. My predominant passion is *Girl*, not *Gold*; nor value I *This*, but as it helps me to *That*, and gives me independence.

I was forced to put it into the sweet novice's head, as well for *my* sake as for *hers* (lest we should be traceable by *her* direction) whither to direct the sending of her cloaths, if they incline to do her that small piece of justice.

If they do, I shall begin to dread a Reconciliation; and must be forced to muse for a contrivance or two, to prevent it; and *to avoid mischief*. For that (as I have told honest Joseph Lemman) is a great point with me.

Thou wilt think me a sad fellow, I doubt. But are not all Rakes sad fellows?—And art not thou, to thy little power, as bad as any? If thou dost all that's in thy head and in thy heart to do, thou art worse than I; for I do not, I assure thee.

I proposed, and she consented, that her cloaths, or whatever else her relations should think fit to send her, should be directed to thy Cousin Osgood's. Let a special messenger, at my charge, bring me any Letter, or portable parcel, that shall come. If not portable, give me notice of it. But thou'lt have no trouble of this sort from her relations, I dare be sworn. And, in this assurance, I will leave them, I think, to act upon their own heads. A man would have no more to answer for than needs must.

But one thing, while I think of it; *which is of great importance to be attended to*—You must hereafter write to me in character, as I shall do to you. It would be a confounded thing to be blown up by a train of my own laying. And who knows what opportunities a man in love may give against himself? In changing a coat or waistcoat, something might be forgotten. I once suffered that way. Then for the sex's curiosity, it is but remembering, in order to guard against it, that the name of their common Mother was Eve.

Another thing remember; I have changed my

name: Changed it without an act of Parliament. 'Robert Huntingford' it is now. Continue *Esquire*. It is a respectable addition, altho' every sorry fellow assumes it, almost to the banishment of the usual travelling one of *Captain*. 'To be left, till called for, at the posthouse at Hertford.'

Upon naming thee, she asked thy character. I gave thee a better than thou deservest, in order to do credit to *myself*. Yet I told her, that thou wert an awkward fellow; and This to do credit to *Thee*, that she may not, if ever she be to see thee, expect a cleverer man than she'll find. Yet thy *apparent* awkwardness befriends thee not a little: For wert thou a slightly mortal, people would discover nothing extraordinary in thee, when they conversed with thee: Whereas seeing a Bear, they are surpris'd to find in thee any-thing that is like a Man. Felicitate thyself then upon thy defects; which are evidently thy principal perfections; and which occasion thee a distinction which otherwise thou wouldst never have.

The lodgings we are in at present are not convenient. I was so delicate as to find fault with them, as communicating with each other, because I knew she would; and told her, That were I sure she was safe from pursuit, I would leave her in them (since such was her earnest desire and expectation) and go to London.

She must be an Infidel against all reason and appearances, if I do not banish even the *shadow* of mistrust from her heart.

Here are two young likely girls, Daughters of the Widow Sorlings; that's the name of our landlady.

I have only, at present, admired them in their dairy-works. How greedily do the Sex swallow praise!— Did I not once, in the streets of London, see a well-dressed handsome girl laugh, bridle, and visibly enjoy the praises of a footy dog, a chimney-sweeper:

• sweeper: Who, with his empty sack cross his
 • shoulder, after giving her the way, stopt, and held
 • up his brush and shovel in admiration of her?—Egad,
 • girl, thought I, I despise thee as Lovelace: But
 • were I the chimney-sweeper, and could only con-
 • trive to get into thy presence, my life to thy virtue,
 • I would have thee.

So pleased was I with the younger Sorlings, for the elegance of her works, that I kissed her, and she made me a courtesy for my condescension; and blushed, and seemed *sensible all over*: Encouragingly, yet innocently, she adjusted her handkerchief, and looked towards the door, as much as to say, She would not tell, were I to kiss her again.

Her elder Sister popt upon her. The conscious girl blushed again, and looked so confounded, that I made an excuse for her, which gratified both. Mrs. Betty, said I, I have been so much pleased with the neatness of your dairy-works, that I could not help saluting your Sister: You have *your* share of merit in them, I am sure—Give me leave—

Good souls!—I like them both—She courtesied too!—How I love a grateful temper! O that my Clarissa were but half so acknowleging!

I think I must get one of them to attend my Charmer when she removes.—The Mother seems to be a notable woman. She had not best, however, be too notable: Since, were she by suspicion to give a face of difficulty to the matter, it would prepare me for a trial with one or both the Daughters.

Allow me a little rhodomontade, Jack—But really and truly, my heart is fixed. I can think of no creature breathing of the Sex, but my Gloriana.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;

In Continuation.

THIS is Wednesday; the day that I was to have lost my Charmer for ever to the hideous Solmes! With what high satisfaction and heart's-ease can I now sit down, and triumph over my Men in Straw at Harlowe-Place! Yet 'tis perhaps best for them, that she got off as she did. Who knows what consequences might have followed upon my attending her in; or (if she had not met me) upon my projected visit, followed by my Myrmidons?

But had I even gone in with her un-accompanied, I think I had but little reason for apprehension: For well thou knowest, that *the tame Spirits* which value themselves upon Reputation, and are held within the skirts of the Law by political considerations only, may be compared to an infectious Spider; which will run into his hole the moment one of his threads is touched by a finger that can crush him, leaving all his toils defenceless, and to be brushed down at the will of the potent invader. While a silly Fly, that has neither courage nor strength to resist, no sooner gives notice by its buz and its struggle, of its being intangled, but out steps the self-circumscribed tyrant, winds round and round the poor insect, till he covers it with his bowel-spun toils; and when so fully secured, that it can neither move leg nor wing, suspends it, as if for a spectacle to be exulted over: Then stalking to the door of his cell, turns about, glotes over it at a distance; and, sometimes advancing, something retiring, preys at leisure upon its vitals.

But now I think of it, will not this comparison do as well for the *intangled girls*, as for the *tame spirits*? —Better o' my conscience! —'Tis but comparing the Spider to us brave fellows; and it *quadrates*.

Whatever

Whatever our hearts are in, our heads will follow. Begin with *Spiders*, with *Flies*, with what we will, Girl is the centre of gravity, and we all naturally tend to it.

Nevertheless, to recur; I cannot but observe, that these *tame spirits* stand a poor chance in a fairly offensive war with such of us mad fellows, as are above all Law, and scorn to skulk behind the hypocritical screen of Reputation.

Thou knowest, that I never scrupled to throw myself among numbers of adversaries; the more the safer: One or two, no fear, will take the part of a single adventurer, if not *intentionally*, in *fact*: holding him in, while others hold in the principal antagonist, to the augmentation of their mutual prowess, till both are prevailed upon to compromise, or one to absent. So that upon the whole, the Law-breakers have the advantage of the Law-keepers, all the world over; at least for a time, and till they have run to the end of their race.—Add to this, in the question between me and the Harlowes, that the whole family of them must know that they have injured me—must therefore be afraid of me.—Did they not, at their own Church, cluster together like bees, when they saw me enter it? Nor knew they which should venture out first, when the Service was over.

James, indeed, was not there. If he had, he would perhaps have endeavoured to *look* valiant. But there is a sort of valour in the *face*, which, by its *over-bluster*, shews fear in the *heart*: Just such a face would James Harlowe's have been, had I made them a visit.

When I have had such a face and such a heart as I have described to deal with, I have been all calm and serene, and left it to the friends of the blusterer (as I have done to the Harlowes) to do my work for me.

I am about mustering up in my memory, all that I have ever done, that has been thought praise-worthy,

or but barely tolerable. I am afraid thou canst not help me to many remembrances of this sort ; because I never was so bad as since I have known thee.

Have I not had it in my heart to do *some* good that thou canst remind me of ? Study for me, Jack. I have recollected several instances, which I think will *tell in*—But see if thou canst not help me to some which I may have forgot.

This I may venture to say, That the principal blot in my escutcheon is owing to these Girls, these confounded Girls. But for *Them*, I could go to church with a good conscience : But when I do, There they are. Every-where does Satan spread his snares for me !

But, now I think of it, what if our governors should appoint Churches for the *Women* only, and others for the *Men* ?—Full as proper, I think, for the promoting of *true piety* in both (much better than the Synagogue-lattices) as separate Boarding-schools for their *education*.

There are already male and female dedications of Churches.

St. Swithin's, St. Stephen's, St. Thomas's, St. George's, and so forth, might be appropriated to the men ; and the Santa Katharina's, Santa Anna's, Santa Maria's, Santa Margareta's, for the women.

Yet, were it so, and life to be the forfeiture of being found at the female Churches, I believe that I, like a second Clodius, should change my dress, to come at my Portia or Pompeia, tho' one the Daughter of a Cato, the other the Wife of a Cæsar.

But how I *excuse* !—Yet thou usedst to say, thou likedst my excursions. If thou dost, thou'lt have enow of them : For I never had a subject I so much adored ; and with which I shall probably be compelled to have so much patience, before I strike the blow ; if the blow I do strike.

But

But let me call myself back to my *recordation*-subject—Thou needest not remind me of my *Rosebud*. I have her in my head; and moreover have contrived to give my Fair-one an hint of that affair, by the agency of honest Joseph Leman (*a*); altho' I have not reaped the hoped-for credit of her acknowledgement.

That's the devil; and it was always my hard fate—Every-thing I do that is good, is but as I *ought*!—Every-thing of a contrary nature is brought into the most glaring light against me!—Is this fair? Ought not a balance to be struck? and the credit carried to my account?—Yet I must own too, that I half-grudge Johnny this blooming maiden; for, in truth, I think a fine woman too rich a jewel to hang about a poor man's neck.

Surely, Jack, if I am guilty of a fault in my universal adorations of the Sex, the *women* in general ought to love me the better for it.

And so they do, I thank them heartily; except here and there a covetous little rogue comes cross me, who, under the pretence of loving virtue for its own sake, wants to have me all to herself.

I have rambled enough.

Adieu, for the present.

LETTER XLVII.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, To Miss HOWE.

Thursday Night, April 13.

I Always loved writing, and my unhappy situation gives me now enough of it; and you, I fear, too much. I have had another very warm debate with Mr. Lovelace. It brought on the subject which you advised me not to decline, when it handsomely offered. And I want to have either your acquittal or blame for having suffered it to go off without effect.

(a) See p. 28. 67.

The impatient wretch sent up to me several times, while I was writing my last to you, to desire my company: Yet his business nothing particular; only to hear *him* talk. The man seems pleased with his own volubility; and, whenever he has collected together abundance of smooth things, he wants me to find an ear for them! Yet he need not; for I don't often gratify him either with giving him the praise for his verbosity, or shewing the pleasure in it, that he would be fond of.

When I had finished the Letter, and given it to Mr. Hickman's friend, I was going up again, and had got up half a dozen stairs; when he besought me to stop, and hear what he had to say.

Nothing, as I said, to any new purpose had he to offer; but complainings; and those in a manner, and with an air, as I thought, that bordered upon insolence. He could not live, he told me, unless he had more of my company, and of my *indulgence* too, than I had yet given him.

Hereupon I stept down, and into the parlour, not a little out of humour with him; and the more, as he has very *quietly taken up his quarters here*, without talking of removing, as he had promised.

We began instantly our angry conference. He provoked me; and I repeated several of the plainest things I had said in our former conversations; and particularly told him, that I was every hour more and more dissatisfied with myself, and with him; That he was not a man, who, in my opinion, improved upon acquaintance: And that I should not be easy *till he had left me to myself*.

He might be surpris'd at my warmth, perhaps; but really the man looked so like a simpleton, hesitating, and having nothing to say for himself; or that should excuse the peremptoriness of his demand upon me (when he knew I had been writing a Letter which a gentleman

gentleman waited for) that I flung from him, declaring, that I would be mistress of my own time, and of my own actions, and not be called to account for either.

He was very uneasy till he could again be admitted into my company. And when I was obliged to see him, which was sooner than I liked, never did man put on a more humble and respectful demeanour.

He told me, That he had, upon this occasion, been entering into himself, and had found a great deal of reason to blame himself for an impatience and inconsideration, which, altho' he meant nothing by it, must be very disagreeable to one of my delicacy. That having always aimed at a *manly sincerity* and *openness of heart*, he had not till now discovered, that both were very consistent with that *true politeness*, which he feared he had too much disregarded, while he sought to avoid the contrary extreme; knowing, that in me he had to deal with a Lady, who despised an hypocrite, and who was above all flattery. But, from this time forth, I should find such an alteration in his whole behaviour, as might be expected from a man who knew himself to be honoured with the presence and conversation of a person, *who had the most delicate mind in the world*—that was his flourish.

I said, That he might perhaps expect congratulation upon the discovery he had just now made, to wit, That *true politeness* and *sincerity* were reconcilable: But that I, who had, by a perverse fate, been thrown into his company, had abundant reason to regret that he had not sooner found this out:—Since, I believed, very few men of *Birth* and *Education* were strangers to it.

He knew not, *neither*, he said, that he had so badly behaved himself, as to deserve so very severe a rebuke.

Perhaps not, I replied: But he might, if so, make another discovery from what I had said; which might be

be to *my own* disadvantage: Since, if he had so much reason to be satisfied with *himself*, he would see what an ungenerous person he spoke to, who, when he seemed to give himself airs of humility, which, perhaps, he thought beneath him to assume, had not the civility to make him a compliment upon them; but was ready to take him at his word.

He had long, with infinite pleasure, the pretended *flattery-bater* said, admired my *superior* talents, and a wisdom in so young a Lady, perfectly surprising.

Let me, Madam, said he, stand ever so low in your opinion, I shall believe all you say to be just; and that I have nothing to do, but to govern myself for the future by your example, and by the standard you shall be pleased to give me.

I know better, Sir, replied I, than to value myself upon your volubility of speech. As you pretend to pay so preferable a regard to Sincerity, you should confine yourself to the strict rules of truth, when you speak of me, to myself: And then, altho' you shall be so kind as to imagine, you have *reason* to make me a compliment, you will have much more to pride yourself in those arts which have made so *extraordinary* a young creature so great a fool.

Really, my dear, the man deserves not politer treatment.—And then has he not made a fool, an egregious fool, of me?—I am afraid he himself thinks he has.

I am surprised! I am amazed, Madam, returned he, at so strange a turn upon me!—I am very unhappy, that nothing I can do or say will give you a good opinion of me!—Would to heaven that I knew what I *can* do to obtain the honour of your confidence!

I told him, *that I desired his absence*, of all things. I saw not, I said, that my friends thought it worth their while to give me disturbance: Therefore, if he would set out for London, or Berkshire, or whither he

he pleased, it would be most agreeable to me, and most reputable too.

He would do so, he said, he *intended to do so*, the moment I was in a place to my liking—in a place convenient for me.

This, Sir, will be so, said I, when you are not here to break in upon me, and make the apartments inconvenient.

He did not think this place safe, he replied; and as I intended not to stay here, he had not been so solicitous, as otherwise he should have been, to injoin privacy to his servants, nor to Mrs. Greme at her leaving me; and there were two or three gentlemen in the neighbourhood, he said, with whose servants his gossiping fellows had scraped acquaintance: So that he could not think of leaving me here unguarded and unattended.—But fix upon any place in England where I could be out of danger, and he would go to the furthestmost part of the King's dominions, if by doing so he could make me easy.

I told him plainly, that I should never be in humour with myself for *meeting him*; nor with him, for *seducing me away*: That my regrets increased, instead of diminished: That my Reputation was wounded: That nothing I could do would now retrieve it: And that he must not wonder, if I every hour grew more and more uneasy both with myself and him: That upon the whole, I was willing to take care of myself; and when *he* had left me, I should best know what to resolve upon, and whither to go.

He wished, he said, he were at liberty, without giving me offence, or being thought to intend to *infringe the articles I had stipulated and insisted upon*, to make one humble proposal to me.—But the *sacred regard* he was determined to pay to all my *injunctions* (reluctantly as I had on Monday last put it into his power to serve me) would not permit him to make it,

it, unless I would promise to excuse him, if I did not approve of it.

I asked, in some confusion, What he would say?

He prefaced and paraded on; and then out came, with great diffidence, and many apologies, and a bashfulness which sat very awkwardly upon him, a proposal of speedy solemnization: Which, he said, would put all right; and make my first three or four months (which otherwise must be passed in obscurity and apprehension) a round of visits and visitings to and from all his relations; To Miss Howe; To whom I pleased: And would pave the way to the Reconciliation I had so much at heart.

Your advice had great weight with me just then, as well as *his reasons*, and the consideration of my *unhappy situation*: But what could I say? I wanted somebody to speak for me.

The man saw I was not angry at his motion. I only blushed; and that I am sure I did up to the ears, and looked silly, and like a fool.

He wants not courage. Would he have had me catch at his first, at his *very first word*?—I was *silent* too—And do not the bold Sex take silence for a mark of favour?—Then, *so lately* in my Father's house! Having also declared to him in my Letters, before I had your advice, that I would not think of Marriage till he had passed thro' a state of Probation, as I may call it—How was it possible I could encourage, with *very ready signs* of approbation, such an early proposal? especially so soon after the free treatment he had provoked from me. If I were to die, I could not.

He looked at me with great confidence; as if (notwithstanding his contradictory bashfulness) he would look me through; while my eye but now-and-then could glance at him. He begged my pardon with great humility: He was *afraid* I would think he deserved no other answer, but that of a *contemptuous silence*.

silence. True Love was fearful of offending [Take care, Mr. Lovelace, thought I, how yours is tried by that rule]. Indeed so *sacred a regard* (foolish man!) would he have *to all my declarations made before I honoured him—*

I would hear him no further; but withdrew in a confusion *too visible*, and left him to make his non-sensical flourishes to himself.

I will only add, that, if he really wishes for a speedy Solemnization, he never could have had a luckier time to press for my consent to it. But he let it go off; and indignation has taken place of it: And now it shall be a point with me, to get him at distance from me.

I am, my dearest friend,

Your ever faithful and obliged

CL. H.

LETTER XLVIII.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;

Thursday, Apr. 13.

• **W**HY, Jack, thou needst not make such a
 • *wonderment*, as the girls say, if I should have
 • taken large strides already towards reformation: For
 • dost thou not see, that while I have been so assiduously, night and day, pursuing this single charmer,
 • I have infinitely less to answer for, than otherwise
 • I should have had? Let me see, how many days
 • and nights?—Forty, I believe, after open trenches,
 • spent in the sap only, and never a mine sprung yet!

• By a moderate computation, a dozen kites might
 • have fallen, while I have been only trying to insnare
 • this single lark: Nor yet do I see when I shall be
 • able to bring her to my lure: So more innocent
 • days yet!—But reformation for my stalking-horse,
 • I hope, will be a sure, tho' a slow method to effect
 • all my purposes.

• Then,

• Then, Jack, *thou* wilt have a merit too in engaging my pen, since thy time would be otherwise worse employed: And, after all, who knows but by creating new habits, at the expence of the old, a real reformation may be brought about? I have promised it; and I believe there is a pleasure to be found in being good, reversing that of Nat. Lee's madmen,

• —*Which none but good men know.*

• By all this, seest thou not, how greatly preferable it is, on twenty accounts, to pursue a difficult, rather than an easy chace? I have a desire to inculcate this pleasure upon thee, and to teach thee to fly at nobler game than daws, crows, and wigeons: I have a mind to shew thee from time to time, in the course of the correspondence thou hast so earnestly wished me to begin on this illustrious occasion, that these exalted Ladies may be abased, and to obviate one of the objections that thou madest to me, when we were last together, that the pleasure which attends these nobler aims, remunerates not the pains they bring with them; since, like a paltry fellow as thou wert, thou assertedst, that all women are alike.

• Thou knowest nothing, Jack, of the delicacies of intrigue: Nothing of the glory of outwitting the Witty and the Watchful: Of the joys that fill the mind of the inventive or contriving genius, ruminating which to use of the different webs that offer to him for the entanglement of a haughty charmer, who in her day has given him unnumbered torments.—Thou, Jack, who, like a dog at his ease, contentest thyself to growl over a bone thrown out to thee, dost not know the joys of the chace, and in pursuing a winding game: These I will endeavour to rouse thee to, and thou wilt have reason doubly

• and

and trebly to thank me, as well because of thy present delight, as with regard to thy prospects beyond the moon.

To this place I had written, purely to amuse myself, before I was admitted to my charmer. But now I have to tell thee, that I was quite right in my conjecture, that she would set up for herself, and dismiss me: For she has declared in so many words, that such was her resolution: And why? Because, to be plain with me, the more she saw of me, and of my ways, the less she liked of either.

This cut me to the heart!—I did not cry indeed!—Had I been a woman, I should tho'; and that most plentifully: But I pulled out a white cambrick handkerchief: *That* I could command, but not my tears.

She finds fault with my protestations; with my professions; with my vows: I cannot curse a servant, the only privilege a master is known by, but I am supposed to be a trooper (a)—I must not say, By my soul; nor, As I hope to be saved. Why, Jack, how particular this is! Would she not have me think, I have a precious soul, as well as she?—If she thinks my salvation hopeless, what a devil—(another exceptionable word!) does she propose to reform me for?—So I have not an ardent expression left me.

WHAT can be done with a woman who is above flattery, and despises all praise but that which flows from the approbation of her own heart?

Well, Jack, thou seest it is high time to change my measures. I must run into the *Pious* a little faster than I had designed.

What a sad thing would it be, were I, after all, to lose her person, as well as her opinion! The only

(a) See p. 282.

time that further acquaintance, and no blow struck, nor suspicion given, ever lessened me in a Lady's favour!—A cursed mortification!—'Tis certain I can have no pretence for holding her, if she will go.—No such thing as force to be used; or so much as hinted at: Lord send us safe at London!—That's all I have for it now: And yet it must be the least part of my speech.

But why will this admirable creature urge her destiny? Why will she defy the power she is absolutely dependent upon? Why will she still wish to my face, that she had never left her Father's house? Why will she deny me her company, till she makes me lose my patience, and lay myself open to her resentment? And why, when she is offended, does she carry her indignation to the utmost length that a scornful Beauty, in the *very height* of her *power* and *pride*, can go?

Is it prudent, thinkest thou, in *her* circumstances, to tell me, *repeatedly* to tell me, That she is every hour more and more dissatisfied with herself and me? That I am not one, who improve upon her in my conversation and address? [Couldst thou, Jack, bear this from a captive!] That she shall not be easy while she is with me? That she was thrown upon me by a perverse fate? That she knows better than to value herself upon my volubility? That if I think she deserves the compliments I make her, I may pride myself in those Arts, by which I have made a fool of so extraordinary a person? That she shall never forgive herself for *meeting me*, nor me for *seducing* her away? [*Her very words!*] That her regrets increase instead of diminish? That she will take care of herself; and since her friends think it not worth while to pursue her, she will be left to her own care? That I shall make Mrs. Sorlings's house more agreeable by my absence?—And, go

to Berks, to town, or where-ever I will [to the devil, I suppose] with all her heart?"

The impolitic Charmer!—To a temper so vindictive as she thinks mine! To a Free-liver, as she believes me to be, who has her in his power! I was *before*, as thou knowest, balancing; now this scale, now that, the heaviest. I only waited to see how *her* will would work, how *mine* would lead me on. Thou seest what bias hers takes—And wilt thou doubt that mine will be determined by it? Were not her faults before this, numerous enough? Why will she put me upon looking back?

I will sit down to argue with myself by-and-by, and thou shalt be acquainted with the result.

If thou didst but know, if thou hadst but beheld what an abject slave she made me look like!—I had given myself high airs, as *she* called them: But they were airs that shewed my Love for her: That shewed I could not live out of her company. But she took me down with a vengeance! She made me look about me. So much advantage had she over me; such severe turns upon me; by my Soul, Jack, I had hardly a word to say for myself. I am ashamed to tell thee, what a poor creature she made me look like! But I could have told her something that would have humbled her pretty pride at the instant, had she been in a *proper* place, and *proper* company about her.

To such a place then—and where she cannot fly me—And *then* to see how my will works, and what can be done by the *amorous See-saw*; now humble; now proud; now expecting, or demanding; now submitting, or acquiescing—till I have tired resistance.

But these hints are at present enough. I may further explain myself as I go along; and as I confirm or recede in my future motions. If she *will* revive

past disobligations! If she *will*—But no more, no more, as I said, *at present*, of threatenings.

L E T T E R XLIX.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;

In Continuation.

AND do I not see that I shall need nothing but patience, in order to have all power with me? For what shall we say, if all these complaints of a character wounded; these declarations of increasing regrets for meeting me; of resentments never to be got over for my *seducing* her away; these angry commands to leave her:—What shall we say, If all were to mean nothing but MATRIMONY? And what if my forbearing to enter upon that subject come out to be the true cause of her petulance and uneasiness?

I had once before played about the skirts of the irrevocable obligation; but thought myself obliged to speak in clouds, and to run away from the subject, as soon as she took my meaning, lest she should imagine it to be *ungenerously urged*, now she was in some sort in my power, as she had forbid me, beforehand, to touch upon it, till I were in a state of visible Reformation, and till a Reconciliation with her friends were probable. But now, out-argued, out-talented, and pushed so vehemently to *leave one* whom I had no good pretence to *hold*, if she *would* go; and who could so easily, if I had given her cause to doubt, have thrown herself into other protection, or have returned to Harlowe-Place and Solmes; I spoke out upon the subject, and offered reasons, altho' with infinite doubt and hesitation [*lest she should be offended at me*, Belford!] why she should assent to the legal tie, and make me the happiest of men. And O how the mantled cheek, the downcast eye, the silent, yet trembling lip, and the heaving bosom, a sweet collection

lection of heightened beauties, gave evidence, that the tender was not mortally offensive!

Charming creature, thought I [*But I charge thee, that thou let not any of the Sex know my exultation (a)*] Is it so soon come to this?—Am I already Lord of the destiny of a Clarissa Harlowe?—Am I already the reformed man thou resolvedst I *should* be, before I had the *least* encouragement given me? Is it thus, that *the more thou knowest me, the less thou seest reason to approve of me?*—And can Art and Design enter into a breast so celestial; To banish me from thee, to insist so rigorously upon my absence, in order to bring me closer to thee, and make the blessing dear?—Well do *thy Arts justify mine*; and encourage me to let loose my plotting genius upon thee.

But let me tell thee, charming maid, if thy wishes are at all to be answered, that thou hast yet to account to me for thy reluctance to go off with me, at a crisis when thy going off was necessary to avoid being forced into the nuptial fetters with a wretch, that were he not thy aversion, thou wert no more honest to thy own merit, than to me.

I am *accustomed* to be preferred, let me tell thee, by thy equals in rank too, tho' thy inferiors in merit; but who is not so? And shall I marry a woman, who has given me reason to doubt the preference she has for me?

No, my dearest Love, I have too sacred a regard for thy *Injunctions*, to let them be broken thro', even by thyself. Nor will I take in thy full meaning by blushing silence only. Nor shalt thou give me room

(a) Mr. Lovelace might have spared his caution on this occasion, since many of the Sex (We mention it with regret) who on the first publication had read thus far, and even to the Lady's first escape, have been readier to censure her for over-niceness, as we have observed in a former Note, p. 274, 275. than him for artifices and exultations not less cruel and ungrateful, than ungenerous and unmanly.

to doubt, whether it be Necessity or Love, that inspires this condescending impulse.

Upon these principles, what had I to do, but to construe her silence into contemptuous displeasure? And I begged her pardon for making a motion, which I had so much *reason* to fear would offend her: For the future *I would pay a sacred* regard to her *previous Injunctions*, and prove to her by all my conduct the truth of that observation, That True Love is always fearful of offending.

And what could the Lady say to this? methinks thou askest.

Say!—Why she looked vexed, disconcerted, teased; was at a loss, as I thought, whether to be more angry with herself, or with me. She turned about, however, as if to hide a starting tear; and drew a sigh into two or three but just audible quavers, trying to suppress it; and withdrew—leaving me master of the field.

Tell me not of Politeness: Tell me not of Generosity: Tell me not of Compassion.—Is she not a Match for me? *More* than a Match? Does she not out-do me at every fair weapon? Has she not made me doubt her Love? Has she not taken officious pains to declare, that she was not averse to Solmes for any respect she had to me? and her sorrow for putting herself out of *his* reach; that is to say, for meeting me?

Then what a triumph would it be to the *Harlowe* pride, were I now to marry this Lady? A family beneath my own! No one in it worthy of an alliance with, but her! My own Estate not contemptible! Living within the bounds of it, to avoid dependence upon *their* betters, and obliged to no man living! My expectations still so much *more* considerable! My person, my talents—not to be despised, surely—Yet rejected by them with scorn. Obligated to carry on an underhand address to their Daughter, when two of

the

the most considerable families in the kingdom have made overtures, which I have declined, partly for her sake, and partly because I never will marry, if *she* be not the person. To be forced to *steal* her away; not only from *them*, but from *herself*! And must I be brought to implore forgiveness and reconciliation from the Harlowes?—Beg to be acknowledged as the *Son* of a gloomy tyrant; whose only boast is his riches? As a *Brother* to a wretch, who has conceived immortal hatred to me; and to a Sister who was beneath my attempts, or I would have had her *in my own way* (and that with a tenth part of the trouble and pains that her Sister has cost me)? And, finally, as a *Nephew* to Uncles, who valuing themselves upon their *acquired* fortunes, would insult me, as creeping to them on that account?—Forbid it the Blood of the Lovelaces, that your *last*, and, let me say, not the *meanest* of your stock, should thus creep, thus fawn, thus lick the dust, for a WIFE!—

Proceed anon.

LETTER L.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;

In Continuation.

BUT is it not the divine CLARISSA [*Harlowe* let me not say; my soul spurns them all but her] whom I am thus by implication threatening?—If Virtue be the True Nobility, how is she ennobled, and how would an alliance with her ennoble, were not contempt due to the family from which she sprung, and prefers to me?

But again, let me stop.—Is there not something wrong; *has* there not been something wrong in this divine creature? And will not the reflections upon that wrong (what tho' it may be construed in *my* fa-

vour?) (a) make me unhappy, when *Novelty* has lost its charms, and when, mind and person, she is all my own? Libertines are nicer, if *at all* nice, than other men. They seldom meet with the Stand of Virtue in the women whom they attempt. And by the frailty of those they have triumphed over, they judge of all the rest. ‘*Importunity* and *Opportunity* no woman is proof against, especially from a persevering Lover, who knows how to suit Temptations to Inclinations:’ This, thou knowest, is a prime article of the Rake’s Creed.

And what! (methinks thou askest with surprize) Dost thou question this most admirable of women?—The Virtue of a CLARISSA dost thou question?

I do not, I dare not question it. My reverence for her, will not let me *directly* question it. But let me, in my turn, ask thee—Is not, may not her Virtue be founded rather in *Pride* than in *Principle*? Whose Daughter is she?—And is she not a *Daughter*? If impeccable, how came she by her impeccability? The pride of setting an Example to her Sex has run away with her hitherto, and may have made her till *now* invincible. But is not that pride abated? What may not both *men* and *women* be brought to do, in a *mortified state*? What mind is superior to calamity? Pride is perhaps the principal bulwark of female virtue. Humble a woman, and may she not be *effectually* humbled?

Then who says, Miss Clarissa Harlowe is the Paragon of Virtue?—Is Virtue itself?

All who know her, and have heard of her, it will be answered.

Common Bruit!—Is Virtue to be established by common Bruit only?—Has her Virtue ever been *proved*?—Who has dared to try her Virtue?

(a) The particular attention of such of the Fair Sex as are more apt to read for the sake of amusement, than instruction, is requested to this Letter of Mr. Lovelace.

I told thee, I would sit down to argue with myself; and I have drawn myself into argumentation before I was aware.

Let me enter into a strict discussion of this subject.

I know how ungenerous an appearance what I *have* said, and what I have *farther* to say, on this topic, will have from *me*: But am I not bringing Virtue to the touchstone, with a view to exalt it, if it come out to be proof?—Avaunt then, for one moment, all consideration that may arise from a weakness which some would miscall *gratitude*; and is oftentimes the corrupter of a heart not ignoble!

To the Test then—And I will bring this charming creature to the *strictest* Test, that all the Sex, who may be shewn any passages in my Letters [And I know thou chearest the hearts of all thy acquaintance with such detached parts of mine, as tend not to dishonour characters, or reveal names: And this gives me an appetite to oblige thee by *interlardment*] *that all the Sex*, I say, may see what they *ought to be*; what is *expected* from them; and if they have to deal with a person of reflection and punctilio (of *Pride*, if thou wilt) how careful they ought to be, by a regular and uniform conduct, not to give him cause to think lightly of them for favours granted, which may be interpreted into *natural weakness*. For is not a Wife the keeper of a man's honour? And do not her faults bring more disgrace upon a Husband, than even upon herself?

It is not for nothing, Jack, that I have disliked the Life of Shackles.

To the Test, then, as I said, since now I have the question brought home to me, Whether I am to have a Wife? And whether she be to be a Wife at the *first*, or at the *second* hand?

I will proceed fairly. I will do the dear creature not only strict, but generous justice; for I will try her

her by her own judgment, as well as by our principles.

She blames herself for having corresponded with me, a man of free character; and one indeed whose first view it was, to draw her into this correspondence; and who succeeded in it, by means unknown to herself.

‘Now, what were her inducements to this correspondence?’ If not what her niceness makes her think blame-worthy, why does she blame herself?

Has she been *capable* of error? Of persisting in that error?

Whoever was the *tempter*, that is not the thing; nor what the *temptation*. The *fact*, the *error*, is now before us.

Did she persist in it against parental prohibition?

She owns she did.

Was a Daughter ever known who had higher notions of the filial duty, of the parental authority?

Never.

‘What must be those inducements, how strong, that were *too strong* for Duty, in a Daughter so *dutiful*?—What must *my* thoughts have been of these inducements; what *my* hopes built upon them, at *the time*, taken in this light?’

Well, but it will be said, That her principal view was, to prevent mischief between her Brother and her other friends, and the man vilely insulted by them all.

But why should *she* be more concerned for the safety of others, than they were for their own? And had not the *Rencontre* then happened? ‘Was a person of Virtue to be prevailed upon to break through her *apparent*, her *acknowledged* duty, upon *any* consideration?’ And if not, was she to be so prevailed upon to prevent an *apprehended* evil only?

Thou,

Thou, Lovelace, the Tempter (thou wilt again break out and say) to be the Accuser!

But I am *not* the Accuser. I am an Arguer only, and, in my heart, all the time acquit and worship the divine creature. But let me, nevertheless, examine, whether the acquittal be owing to her *merit*, or to my *weakness*—Weakness the true name for Love!

But shall we suppose another motive?—And that is Love; a motive which all the world will excuse her for. But let me tell all the world that do, *not* because they *ought*, but because all the world is apt to be misled by it.

Let Love then be the motive:—Love of *whom*?

A *Lovelace*, is the answer.

Is there but *one* Lovelace in the world? May not *more* Lovelaces be attracted by so fine a figure? By such exalted qualities? It was her Character that drew me to her: And it was her Beauty and good Sense, that rivetted my chains; and now all together make me think her a subject worthy of my attempts; worthy of my ambition.

But has she had the candor, the openness, to acknowledge that Love?

She has not.

Well then, if Love it be at bottom, is there not another Fault lurking beneath the shadow of that Love?—Has she not *Affectation*?—Or is it *Pride of heart*?

And what results?—Is then the divine Clarissa capable of *loving* a man whom she ought *not* to love? And is she capable of *Affectation*? And is her virtue founded in *Pride*?—And, if the answer to these questions be affirmative, must she not then be a *woman*?

And can she keep this Lover at bay? Can she make *him*, who has been accustomed to triumph over other women,

women, tremble? Can she so conduct herself, as to make him, at times, question whether she loves *him* or any man; yet not have the requisite command over the passion itself in steps of the highest consequence to her honour, as *she* thinks [*I am trying her, Jack, by her own thoughts*] but suffer herself to be provoked to promise to abandon her Father's house, and go off with him, knowing his character; and even conditioning not to marry till improbable and remote contingencies were to come to pass? What tho' the provocations were such as would justify any other woman; yet was a CLARISSA to be susceptible to provocations which she thinks *herself* highly censurable for being so much moved by?

But let us see the dear creature resolved to revoke her promise; yet *meeting* her Lover; a bold and intrepid man, who was more than once before disappointed by her; and who comes, as she knows, prepared to expect the fruits of her appointment, and resolved to carry her off. And let us see him actually carrying her off; and having her at his mercy—May there not be, I repeat, *other* Lovelaces; other like intrepid persevering enterprizers; altho' they may not go to work in the same way?

And has then a CLARISSA (herself her judge) failed?—In such *great* points failed?—And may she not *further* fail?—Fail in the *greatest* point, to which all the other points in which she *has* failed, have but a natural tendency?

Nor say thou, that Virtue, in the Eye of Heaven, is as much a *manly* as a *womanly* grace. By Virtue in this place I mean Chastity, and to be superior to temptation; my Clarissa out of the question. Nor ask thou, Shall the man be guilty, yet expect the woman to be guiltless, and even unsuspectable? Urge thou not these arguments, I say, since the Wife, by a failure,

failure, may do much more injury to the Husband, than the Husband can do to the Wife, and not only to her Husband, but to all his family, by obtruding another man's children into his possessions, perhaps to the exclusion of (at least to a participation with) his own; he believing them all the time to be his. In the Eye of Heaven, therefore, the sin *cannot* be equal. Besides I have read in some place, *that the woman was made for the man, not the man for the woman.* Virtue then is less to be dispensed with in the woman than in the man.

Thou, Lovelace (methinks some better man than thyself will say) to expect such perfection in a woman!—

Yes, I, may I answer. Was not the great Cæsar a great Rake as to women? Was he not called, by his very soldiers, on one of his triumphant Entries into Rome, *The bald-pated lecher?* and warning given of him to the *Wives*, as well as to the Daughters, of his fellow-citizens?—Yet did not Cæsar repudiate his Wife for being only in company with Clodius, or rather because Clodius, tho' by surprize upon her, was found in her's? And what was the reason he gave for it?—It was this (tho' a Rake himself, as I have said) and only this—*The Wife of Cæsar must not be suspected!*—

Cæsar was not a prouder man than Lovelace.

Go to then, Jack; nor say, nor let any-body say, in thy hearing, that Lovelace, a man valuing himself upon his Ancestry, is singular in his expectations of a Wife's purity, though not pure himself.

As to my CLARISSA, I own, that I hardly think there ever was such an angel of a woman. But has she not, as above, already taken steps, which she herself condemns? Steps, which the world and her own family did not think her *capable* of taking? And for which her own family will not forgive her?

Nor

Nor think it strange, that I refuse to hear any-thing pleaded in behalf of a standard virtue, from *high provocations*. 'Are not provocations and temptations the Tests of Virtue? A standard Virtue must not be allowed to be *provoked* to destroy or annihilate itself.

May not then the Success of him, who could carry her *thus far*, be allowed to be an encouragement for him to try to carry her *farther*?' 'Tis but to try. Who will be afraid of a trial for this divine creature? 'Thou knowest, that I have more than once, twice or thrice, put to the fiery Trial young women of Name and Character; and never yet met with one who held out a month; nor indeed so long as could puzzle my invention. I have concluded against the whole Sex upon it.' And now, if I have not found a Virtue that cannot be corrupted, I will swear that there is not one such in the whole Sex. Is not then the whole Sex concerned that this trial should be made? And who is it that knows this Lady, that would not stake upon her head the honour of the whole?—Let her who would refuse it, come forth, and desire to stand in her place.

I must assure thee, that I have a prodigious high opinion of Virtue; as I have of all those graces and excellencies, which I have not been able to attain myself. Every free liver would not *say* this, nor *think* thus—Every argument he uses, condemnatory of his own actions, as some would think. But ingenuousness was ever a signal part of my character.

Satan, whom thou mayest, if thou wilt, in this case, call my instigator, put the good man of old upon the severest trials. 'To his behaviour under these trials, that good man owed his honour and his future rewards.' An innocent person, if doubted, must wish to be brought to a fair and candid trial.

Rinaldo

Rinaldo indeed in Ariosto put the Mantuan Knight's Cup of trial from him, which was to be the proof of his Wife's chastity (a)—This was his argument for forbearing the experiment: 'Why should I seek a thing I should be loth to find? My Wife is a Woman. The Sex is frail. I cannot believe better of her than I do. It will be to my own loss, if I find reason to think worse.' But Rinaldo would not have refused the trial of the Lady, before she became his Wife, and when he might have found his account in detecting her.

For my part, I would not have put the Cup from me, tho' married, had it been but in hope of finding reason to confirm my *good* opinion of my Wife's honour; and that I might know whether I had a Snake or a Dove in my bosom.

To my point—'What must that Virtue be, which will not stand a trial?—What that Woman, who would wish to shun it?'

Well then, a trial seems necessary for the further establishment of the Honour of so excellent a creature.

And who shall put her to this trial?—Who, but the man, who has, as she thinks, already induced her, in *lesser* points, to swerve?—And this for her *own* sake in a double sense—Not only, as he has been able to make *some* impression, but as she *regrets* the impression made; and so may be presumed to be guarded against his further attempts.

The Situation she is at present in, it must be confessed, is a disadvantageous one to her: But if she overcome, that will redound to her honour.

Shun not, therefore, my dear soul, further trials, nor hate me for making them.—'For what wo-

(a) The story tells us, That whoever drank of this cup, if his wife were chaste, could drink without spilling: If otherwise, the contrary.

'man can be said to be virtuous till she has been tried?'

'Nor is *one* effort, *one* trial, to be sufficient. Why?

'Because a woman's heart may be at one time *adamant*, at another *wax*?'—As I have often experienced.

And so, no doubt, hast thou.

A fine time of it, methinks, thou sayest, would the women have, if they were all to be tried!—

But, Jack, I am not for that neither. Tho' I am a Rake, I am not a Rake's friend; except thine and company's.

And be this one of the morals of my tedious discussion—'Let the little rogues who would not be

'*put to the question*, as I may call it, chuse accord-

'ingly. Let them prefer to their favour, good

'honest sober fellows, who have not been used to

'play dogs tricks: Who will be willing to take them

'as they *offer*; and who being tolerable themselves,

'are not suspicious of others.'

But what, methinks thou askest, is to become of the Lady, if she fail?

What?—Why will she not, '*if once subdued, be always subdued*?' Another of our Libertine maxims.

And what an immense pleasure to a Marriage-hater,

what rapture to thought, to be able to prevail upon

such a woman as Miss Clarissa Harlowe to live with

him, without *real* change of name!

But if she resist—If nobly she stand her trial?—

Why then I will marry her; and bless my stars for such an angel of a Wife.

But will she not hate thee?—Will she not refuse—

No, no, Jack!—Circumstanced and situated as

we are, I am not afraid of that. And hate me!

Why should she hate the man who loves her upon

proof?

And then for a little hint at *reprisal*—Am I not

justified

justified in my resolutions of trying *her* Virtue; who is resolved, as I may say, to try *mine*? who has declared, that she will not marry me, till she has hopes of my Reformation?

And now, to put an end to this sober argumentation, wilt thou not thyself (whom I have supposed an advocate for the Lady, because I know that Lord M. has put thee upon using the interest he thinks thou hast in me, to persuade me to enter the Pale; *wilt thou not thyself*) allow me to try, if I cannot awaken the *woman* in her?—To try, if she, with all that glowing symmetry of parts, and that full bloom of vernal graces, by which she attracts every eye, be really inflexible as to the grand article?

Let me begin then, as opportunity presents.—I will; and watch her every step to find one sliding one; her every moment, to find the moment critical. And the rather, as she spares not me, but takes every advantage that offers, to puzzle and plague me; nor expects nor thinks me to be a good man.

If she be a *woman*, and *love* me, I shall surely catch her once tripping: For Love was ever a traitor to its harbourer: And Love *within*, and I *without*, she will be *more* than woman, as the poet says, or I *less* than man, if I succeed not.

Now, Belford, all is out. The Lady is mine; shall be *more* mine. Marriage, I see, is in my power, now *she* is so. Else perhaps it had not. If I can have her *without* marriage, who can blame me for trying? If *not*, great will be her glory, and my future confidence. And well will she merit the sacrifice I shall make her of my liberty; and from all her Sex Honours next to divine, for giving a proof, 'that there was once a woman whose Virtue no trials, no stratagems, no temptations, even from the man she hated not, could overpower.'

Now wilt thou see all my Circulation: As in a glass

wilt thou see it.—CABALA, however, is the word (a); nor let the secret escape thee even in thy dreams.

Nobody doubts, that she is to be my Wife. Let her pass for such, when I give the word. Mean-
‘time Reformation shall be my Stalking-horse;
‘some one of the women in London, if I can
‘get her thither, my Bird.’ And so much for this time.

L E T T E R L I.

Miss HOWE, To Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE.

[In answer to Letters xli. xlvii.]

DO not be so much concerned, my dearest friend, at the bickerings between my Mother and me. We love one another dearly notwithstanding. If my Mother had not me to find fault with, she must find fault with somebody else. And as to me, I am a very saucy girl; and were there not this occasion, there would be some other, to shew it.

You have heard me *say*, that this was always the case between us. You could not *otherwise* have known it. For when *you* was with us, you harmonized us both; and indeed I was always more afraid of you than of my Mother. But then that Awe is accompanied with Love. Your reproofs, as I have always found, are so charmingly mild and instructive; so evidently calculated to improve, and not to provoke; that a generous temper must be amended by them. But here now, mind my good Mamma, when you are not with us—*You shall, I tell you, Nancy. I will have it so. Don't I know best? I won't be disobeyed.* How can a Daughter of spirit bear such language; such Looks too with the language; and not have a longing mind to disobey?

Don't advise me, my dear, to subscribe to my Mo-

(a) This word, whenever used by any of these Gentlemen, was agreed to imply an inviolable secret.

ther's

ther's prohibition of correspondence with you. She has no reason for it. Nor would she of her own judgment have prohibited it. That odd old ambling soul your Uncle (whose visits are frequenter than ever) instigated by your malicious and selfish Brother and Sister, is the occasion. And they only have borrowed my Mother's lips, at the distance they are from you, for a sort of speaking-trumpet for them. The prohibition, once more I say, cannot come from her heart: But if it did, is so much danger to be apprehended from my continuing to write to one of my own Sex, as if I wrote to one of the other? Don't let dejection and disappointment, and the course of oppression which you have run thro', weaken your mind, my dearest creature; and make you see inconveniencies, where there possibly cannot be any. If *your* talent is *scribbling*, as you call it; so is *mine*—And I will scribble on, at all opportunities; and to you; let 'em say what they will. Nor let your Letters be filled with the self-accusations you mention: There is no cause for them. I wish, that your Anna Howe, who continues in her Mother's house, were but half so good as Miss Clarissa Harlowe, who has been driven out of her Father's.

I will say nothing upon your Letter to your Sister till I see the effect it will have. You hope, you tell me, that you shall have your money and cloaths sent you, notwithstanding my opinion to the contrary—I am sorry to have it to acquaint you, that I have just now heard, that they have sat in council upon your Letter; and that your Mother was the only person, who was for sending you your things; and was overruled. I charge you therefore to accept of my offer, as by my last; and give me particular directions for what you want, that I can supply you with besides.

Don't set your thought so much upon a Reconciliation, as to prevent your laying hold of any hand-

some opportunity to give yourself a protector; such a one as the man will be, who, I imagine, Husband-like, will let nobody insult you but himself.

What could he mean, by letting slip such a one as that you mention? I don't know how to blame you; for how could you go beyond silence and blushes, when the foolish fellow came with his observances of the restrictions which you laid him under when in another situation? But, as I told you above, you really strike people into awe. And, upon my word, you did not spare him.

I repeat what I said in my last, that you have a very nice part to act: And I will add, that you have a Mind that is much too delicate for your part. But when the Lover is exalted, the Lady must be humbled. He is naturally proud and saucy. I doubt, you must engage his *pride*, which he calls his *honour*: And that you must throw off a little more of the veil. And I would have you restrain your wishes before him, that you had not met him, and the like. What signifies wishing, my dear? He will not bear it. You can hardly expect that he will.

Nevertheless it vexes me to the very bottom of my pride, that any wretch of that Sex should be able to triumph over such a woman as you.

I cannot however but say, that I am charmed with your spirit. So much Sweetness, where Sweetness is requisite; so much Spirit where Spirit is called for—What a true magnanimity!

But I doubt, in your present circumstances, you must endeavour after a little more of the reserve, in cases where you are displeased with him, and palliate a little. That humility which he puts on when you rise upon him, is not natural to him.

Methinks I see the man hesitating, and looking like the fool you paint him, under your corrective superiority!—But he is not a fool. Don't put him upon mingling Resentment with his Love.

You are very serious, my dear, in the first of the two Letters before me, in relation to Mr. Hickman and me; and in relation to my Mother and me. But, as to the latter, you must not be too grave. If we are not well together at one time, we are not ill together at another. And while I am able to make her smile in the midst of the most angry fit she ever fell into on the present occasion (tho' sometimes she would not if she could help it) it is a very good sign; a sign that displeasure can never go deep, or be lasting. And then a kind word, or kind look, to her favourite Hickman, sets the one into raptures, and the other in tolerable humour, at any time.

But your case pains me at heart; and with all my levity, both the good folks must sometimes partake of that pain; nor will it be over, as long as you are in a state of uncertainty; and especially as I was not able to prevail for that protection for you which would have prevented the unhappy step, the necessity for which we both, with so much reason, deplore.

I have only to add (and yet that is needless to tell you) That I am, and will ever be,

Your affectionate Friend and Servant,

ANNA HOWE.

LETTER LII.

Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, To Miss HOWE.

YOU tell me, my dear, that my cloaths and the little sum of money I left behind me, will not be sent me.—But I will still hope. It is yet early days. When their passions subside, they will better consider of the matter; and especially as I have my ever dear and excellent Mother for my friend in this request. O the sweet indulgence! How has my heart bled, and how does it still bleed for her!

You advise me not to depend upon a Reconciliation. I do not, I cannot, depend upon it. But nevertheless it is the wish next my heart. And as to this man, what can I do? You see, *that Marriage is not absolutely in my own power*, if I were inclined to prefer it to the trial which I think I ought to have principally in view to make for a Reconciliation.

You say, he is proud and insolent—Indeed he is. But can it be your opinion, that he intends to humble me down to the level of his mean pride?

And what mean you, my dear friend, when you say, that I must throw off a *little more of the veil*?—Indeed I never knew that I wore one. Let me assure you, that if I see any-thing in Mr. Lovelace that looks like a design to humble me, his insolence shall never make me discover a weakness unworthy of a person distinguished by your friendship; that is to say, unworthy either of my *Sex*, or of my *former Self*.

But I hope, as I am out of all other protection, that he is not capable of mean or *low* resentments. If he has had any extraordinary trouble on my account, may he not thank himself for it? He may; and lay it, if he pleases, to his *Character*; which, as I have told him, gave at least a *pretence* to my Brother against him. And then, did I ever make him any promises? Did I ever profess a Love for him? Did I ever wish for the continuance of his address? Had not my Brother's violence precipitated matters, would not my indifference to him, in all likelihood (as I designed it should) have tired out his proud spirit (*a*), and made him set out for London, where he used chiefly to reside? And if he *had*, would there not have been an end of all his pretensions and hopes? For no encouragement had I given him: Nor did I

(*a*) See Vol. I. p. 23.

then correspond with him. Nor, believe me, should I have begun to do so—the fatal Rencounter not having then happened; which drew me in afterwards for others sakes (fool that I was!) and not for my own. And can you think, or can *be*, that even this but temporarily-intended correspondence (which, by the way, my Mother (*a*) connived at) would have ended thus, had I not been driven on one hand, and teased on the other, to continue it; the occasion which had at first induced it, continuing? What pretence then has he, were I to be absolutely in his power, to avenge himself on me, for the faults of others; and thro' which I have suffered more than he?—It cannot, cannot be, that I should have cause to apprehend him to be so ungenerous, so bad, a man.

You bid me not be concerned at the bickerings between your Mother and you. Can I avoid concern, when those bickerings are on my account? That they are raised (instigated shall I say?) by my Uncle, and my other relations, surely must add to my concern.

But I must observe, perhaps too critically for the state my mind is in at present, that the very sentences you give from your Mother, as so many *imperatives* which you take amiss, are very severe reflections upon yourself. For instance—*You shall, I tell you, Nancy*, implies, that you had disputed her will—And so of the rest.

And further let me observe, with respect to what you say, that there cannot be the same reason for a prohibition of correspondence with me, as there was of mine with Mr. Lovelace; that I thought as little of bad consequences from my correspondence with him at the time, as you can do from yours with me, now. But if *obedience be a duty*, the *breach* of it is

(*b*) See Vol. I. p. 26.

the *fault*, however circumstances may differ. Surely there is no merit in setting up our own judgment against the judgments of our parents. And if it be punishable so to do, I have been severely punished; and that is what I warned you of, from my own dear experience.

Yet, God forgive me! I advise thus against myself with very great reluctance: And, to say truth, have not strength of mind, at present, to decline it myself. But, if the occasion go not off, I will take it into farther consideration.

You give me very good advice in relation to this man; and I thank you for it. When you bid me be more upon the *reserve* with him in expressing my displeasure, perhaps I may try for it: But to *palliate*, as you call it, that, my dearest Miss Howe, cannot be done, by

Your own

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

LETTER LIII.

Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, To Miss HOWE.

YOU may believe, my dear Miss Howe, that the circumstance of the noise and outcry within the garden-door, on Monday last, gave me no small uneasiness, to think that I was in the hands of a man, who could, by such vile premeditation, lay a snare to trick me out of myself, as I have so frequently called it.

Whenever he came in my sight, the thought of this gave me an indignation that made his presence disgustful to me; and the more, as I fancied I beheld in his face a triumph which reproached my weakness on that account; altho' perhaps it was only the same vivacity and placidness that generally fit upon his features.

I was resolved to task him upon this subject; the first time I could have patience to enter upon it with him. For, besides that it piqued me excessively from the nature of the artifice, I expected shuffling and evasion, if he were guilty, that would have incensed me: And, if not confessedly guilty, such unsatisfactory declarations, as still would have kept my mind doubtful and uneasy; and would, upon every new offence that he might give me, sharpen my disgusts to him.

I have had the opportunity I waited for; and will lay before you the result.

He was making his court to my good opinion in very polite terms, and with great seriousness lamenting that he had lost it; declaring, that he knew not how he had deserved to do so; attributing to me an indifference to him, that seemed, to his infinite concern, hourly to increase. And he besought me to let him know my whole mind, that he might have an opportunity either to confess his faults and amend them, or clear his conduct to my satisfaction, and thereby intitle himself to a greater share of my confidence.

I answered him with quickness—Then, Mr. Lovelace, I will tell you one thing with a frankness, that is, perhaps, more suitable to *my* character, than to *yours* [*He hoped not, he said*] which gives me a very bad opinion of you, as a designing artful man.

I am all attention, Madam.

I never can think tolerably of you, while the noise and voice I heard at the garden-door, which put me into the terror you took so much advantage of, remains unaccounted for. Tell me fairly, tell me candidly, the whole of that circumstance; and of your dealings with that wicked Joseph Leman; and according to your explicitness in this particular, I shall form a judgment of your future professions.

I will, without reserve, my dearest life, said he, tell you the whole ; and hope that my sincerity in the relation will atone for any-thing you may think wrong in the fact.

‘ I knew nothing, *said he*, of this man, this Le-man, and should have scorned a resort to so low a method as bribing the servant of any family to let me into the secrets of that family, if I had not detected him in attempting to corrupt a servant of mine, to inform him of all my motions, of all my supposed intrigues, and, in short, of every action of my private life, as well as of my circumstances and engagements ; and this for motives too obvious to be dwelt upon.

‘ My servant told me of his offers, and I ordered him, unknown to the fellow, to let me hear a conversation that was to pass between them.

‘ In the midst of it, and just as he had made an offer of money for a particular piece of intelligence, promising more when procured, I broke in upon them, and by bluster, calling for a knife to cut off his ears (one of which I took hold of) in order to make a present of it, as I said, to his employers, I obliged him to tell me who they were.

‘ Your Brother, Madam, and your Uncle Antony, he named.

‘ It was not difficult, when I had given him my pardon on naming them (after I had set before him the enormity of the task he had undertaken, and the honourableness of my intentions to your dear self) to prevail upon him, by a larger reward, to serve me ; since, at the same time, he might preserve the favour of your Uncle and Brother, as I desired to know nothing, but what related to myself and to you, in order to guard us both against the effects of an ill-will, which all his fellow-servants, as well as himself, as he acknowledged, thought undeserved.

‘ By

By this means, I own to you, Madam, I frequently turned his principals about upon a pivot of my own, unknown to themselves: And the fellow, who is always calling himself a *plain man*, and boasting of his *Conscience*, was the easier, as I condescended frequently to assure him of my honourable views; and as he knew that the use I made of his intelligence in all likelihood prevented fatal mischiefs.

I was the more pleased with his services; as (let me acknowledge to you, Madam) they procured to you, unknown to yourself, a safe and uninterrupted egress (which perhaps would not otherwise have been continued to you so long as it was) to the garden and wood-house: For he undertook to them, to watch all your motions: And the more chearfully (for the fellow loves you) as it kept off the curiosity of others (a).

So, my dear, it comes out, that I *myself* was obliged to this deep contriver.

I sat in silent astonishment; and thus he went on.

As to the circumstance, for which you think so hardly of me, I do freely confess, that having a suspicion that you would revoke your intention of getting away, and in that case apprehending that we should not have the time together that was necessary for that purpose; I had ordered him to keep off every body he *could* keep off, and to be himself within view of the garden-door; for I was determined, if possible, to induce you to adhere to your resolution.—

But pray, Sir, interrupting him, how came you to apprehend that I should revoke my intention? I had indeed deposited a Letter to that purpose; but you had it not: And how, as I had reserved to myself the privilege of a revocation, did you know,

(a) See Vol. I. p. 227, 228.

but I might have prevailed upon my friends, and so have revoked upon good grounds. I will be very ingenuous, Madam. — You had made me hope that if you changed your mind, you would give me a meeting to apprise me of the reasons for it. I went to the loose bricks, and I saw the Letter there. And as I knew your friends were immovably fixed in their schemes, I doubted not but the Letter was to revoke or suspend your resolution; and probably to serve instead of a meeting too. I therefore let it lie, that if you *did* revoke, you might be under the necessity of meeting me for the sake of the expectation you had given me. And as I came prepared, I was resolved, pardon me, Madam, whatever were your intentions, that you should not go back. Had I taken your Letter, I must have been determined by the contents of it, for the present, at least. But not having received it, and you having reason to think I wanted not resolution, in a situation so desperate, to make your friends a personal visit, I depended upon the interview you had bid me hope for.

Wicked wretch to said I; It is my grief, that I gave you opportunity to take so exact a measure of my weakness! — But *would* you have presumed to visit the family, had I not met you?

Indeed I would. I had some friends in readiness, who were to have accompanied me to them. And had your Father refused to give me audience, I would have taken my friends with me to Solmes.

And what did you intend to do to Mr. Solmes?

Not the least hurt, had the man been passive.

But had he *not* been passive, as you call it, what would you have done to Mr. Solmes?

He was loth, he said, to tell me. — Yet not the least hurt to his person.

I repeated my question,

and

If

If he *must* tell me, he only proposed to carry off the *poor fellow*, and to hide him for a month or two. And this he would have done, let what would have been the consequence.

Was ever such a wretch heard of!—I sighed from the bottom of my heart: But bid him proceed from the part I had interrupted him at.

I ordered the fellow, as I told you, Madam, said he, to keep within view of the garden-door: And if he found any parley between us, and anybody coming (before you could retreat undiscovered) whose coming might be attended with violent effects, he would cry out; and this not only in order to save himself from their suspicions of him, but to give me warning to make off, and, if possible, to induce you (I own it, Madam) to go off with me, according to your own appointment. And I hope, all circumstances considered, and the danger I was in of losing you for ever, that the acknowledgement of *this* contrivance, or if you had *not* met me, *that* upon Solmes, will not procure me your hatred: For, had they come, as I expected as well as you, what a despicable wretch had I been, could I have left you to the insults of a Brother and others of your family, whose mercy was cruelty when they had *not* the pretence with which this detected Interview would have furnished them!

What a wretch, said I!—But if, Sir, taking your *own* account of this strange matter to be fact, anybody were coming, how happened it, that I saw only that man Leman (I *thought* it was he) out of the door, and at a distance, look after us?

Very lucky! said he, putting his hand first in one pocket, then in another—I hope I have not thrown it away—It is, perhaps, in the coat I had on yesterday—Little did I think it would be necessary to be

pro-

produced—But I love to come to a demonstration whenever I can—I *may* be giddy—I *may* be heedless. I *am* indeed—But no, man, as to *you*, Madam, ever had a sincerer heart.

He then stepping to the parlour-door, called his servant to bring him the coat he had on yesterday.

The servant did. And in the pocket, rumpled up, as a paper he regarded not, he pulled out a Letter, written by that Joseph, dated Monday night; in which, he begs pardon for crying out so soon—says, ‘That his fears of being discovered to act on both sides, had made him take the rushing of a little dog (that always follows him) thro’ the phyllirex-hedge, for Betty’s being at hand, or some of his matters: And that when he found his mistake, he opened the door by his own key (which the contriving wretch confessed he had furnished him with) and inconsiderately ran out in a hurry, to have apprised him that his crying-out was owing to his fright only:’ And he added, ‘that they were upon the hunt for me, by the time he returned (a).’

I shook my head—Deep! deep! deep! said I, at the best!—O Mr. Lovelace! God forgive and reform you!—But you are, I see plainly (upon the whole of your own account) a very artful, a very designing man.

Love, my dearest Life, is ingenious. Night and day have I racked my stupid brain [*O Sir, thought I, not stupid! ’Twere well perhaps if it were*] to contrive methods to prevent the sacrifice designed to be made of you, and the mischief that must have ensued upon it: So little hold in your affections: Such undeserved antipathy from your friends: So much

(a) See his Letter to Joseph Leman, No. xxxv. of this volume, p. 260, 261. where he tells him, he would contrive for him a Letter of this nature to copy.

danger of losing you for ever from *both* causes. I have not had for the whole fortnight before last Monday, half an hour's rest at a time. And I own to you, Madam, that I should never have forgiven myself, had I omitted any contrivance or forethought that would have prevented your return without me.

Again I blamed myself for meeting him : And justly ; for there were many chances to one, that I had *not* met him. And if I had not, all his fortnight's contrivances, as to me, would have come to nothing ; and perhaps I might nevertheless have escaped Solmes.

Yet, had he resolved to come to Harlowe-Place with his friends, and been insulted, as he certainly would have been, what mischiefs might have followed !

But his resolution to run away with and to hide the poor Solmes for a month or so, O my dear ! what a wretch have I let run away with *me*, instead of *Solmes* !

I asked him, if he thought such enormities as these, such defiance of the Laws of Society, would have passed unpunished ?

He had the assurance to say, with one of his usual gay airs, That he should by this means have disappointed his enemies, and saved me from a forced marriage. He had no pleasure in such desperate pushes. Solmes he would not have *personally* hurt. He must have fled his country, for a time at least : And, truly, if he had been obliged to do so (as all his hopes of my favour must have been at an end) he would have had a fellow-traveller of his own Sex out of our family, whom I little thought of.

Was ever such a wretch !—To be sure he meant my Brother !

And such, Sir, said I, in high resentment, are the uses you make of your corrupt intelligencer—

My

My corrupt intelligencer, Madam, interrupted he! He is to this hour your Brother's as well as mine. By what I have ingenuously told you, you may see who began this corruption. Let me assure you, Madam, that there are many free things which I have been guilty of as *reprisals*, in which I would not have been the *aggressor*.

All that I shall further say on this head, Mr. Lovelace, is this: That as this vile double-faced wretch has probably been the cause of great mischief on both sides, and *still* continues, as you own, his wicked practices, I think it would be but just, to have my friends apprised what a creature *he* is whom some of them encourage.

What you please, Madam, as to that—My service, as well as your Brother's, is now almost over for him. The fellow has made a good hand of it. He does not intend to stay long in his place. He is now actually in treaty for an Inn, which will do his business for life. I can tell you further, that he makes Love to your Sister's Betty: And that *by my advice*. They will be married when he is established. An Innkeeper's wife is every man's mistress; and I have a scheme in my head to set some engines at work to make *her* repent her saucy behaviour to you to the last day of her life.

What a wicked schemer are you, Sir!—Who shall avenge upon you the still greater evils which you have been guilty of? I forgive Betty with all my heart. She was not my servant; and but too probably, in what she did, obeyed the commands of her to whom she owed duty, better than I obeyed those to whom I owed more.

No matter for that, the wretch said [*To be sure, my dear, he must design to make me afraid of him*] The decree was gone out—Betty must smart—Smart too by an act of her own choice. He loved, he said,

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to make bad people their own punishers.—Nay, Madam, excuse me; but if the fellow, if this Joseph, in *your* opinion, deserves punishment, mine is a complicated scheme; a man and his wife cannot well suffer separately, and it may come home to *him* too.

I had no patience with him. I told him so. I see, Sir, said I, I see, what a man I am with. Your *Rattle* warns me of the *Snake*.—And away I flung; leaving him seemingly vexed, and in confusion.

LETTER LIV.

Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, To Miss HOWE.

MY plaindealing with Mr. Lovelace, on seeing him again, and the free dislike I expressed to his ways, his manners, and his contrivances, as well as to his speeches, have obliged him to recollect himself a little. He will have it, that the menaces which he threw out just now against my Brother and Mr. Solmes, are only the effect of an unmeaning pleasantry. He has too great a stake in his Country, he says, to be guilty of *such* enterprizes as should lay him under a necessity of quitting it for ever. Twenty things, particularly, he says, he has suffered Joseph Leman to tell of him, that *were not*, and *could not* be true, in order to make himself formidable in some peoples eyes, and this purely with a view to *prevent mischief*. He is unhappy, as far as he knows, in a quick invention, in hitting readily upon expedients; and many things are reported of him which he never said, and many which he never did, and others which he has only talked of (as just now) and which he has forgot as soon as the words have passed his lips.

This may be so, in part, my dear. No one man so young could be so wicked as he has been reported

to be. But such a man at the head of such wretches as he is said to have at his beck, all men of fortune and fearlessness, and capable of such enterprizes as I have unhappily found him capable of, what is not to be apprehended from him!

His carelessness about his Character is one of his excuses: A very bad one. What hope can a woman have of a man who values not his Reputation?—These gay wretches may, in mix'd conversation, divert for an hour, or so: But the man of probity, the man of virtue, is the man that is to be the Partner for Life. What woman, who could help it, would submit it to the courtesy of a wretch, who avows a disregard to all moral sanctions, whether he will perform his part of the matrimonial obligation, and treat her with tolerable politeness?

With these notions, and with these reflections, to be thrown upon such a man myself—Would to Heaven—But what avail wishes now?—To whom can I fly, if I would fly from him?

LETTER LV.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;

Friday, April 14.

NEVER did I hear of such a parcel of foolish toads as these Harlowes!—Why, Belford, the Lady must fall, if every hair of her head were a guardian angel, unless they were to make a visible appearance for her, or, snatching her from me at unawares, would draw her after them into the starry regions.

All I had to apprehend, was, that a Daughter so reluctantly carried off, would offer terms to her Father, and would be accepted upon a mutual *concedence*; *They* to give up *Solmes*; *She* to give up *me*. And so I was contriving to do all I could to guard

against

against the latter. But they seem resolved to perfect the work they have begun.

What stupid creatures are there in the world ! This foolish Brother, not to know, that he who would be bribed to undertake a base thing by one, would be *over-bribed* to *retort* the baseness ; especially when he could be put into the way to serve himself by both !—Thou, Jack, wilt never know one half of my contrivances.

He here relates the conversation between him and the Lady (upon the subject of the noise and exclamations his agent made at the garden-door) to the same effect as in the Lady's Letter N^o liii. and proceeds exulting :

What a capacity for glorious mischief has thy friend !—Yet how near the truth all of it ! The only deviation, my asserting, that the fellow made the noises by *mistake*, and thro' *fright*, and not by *previous direction* : Had she known the precise truth, her anger to be so taken in, would never have let her forgive me.

Had I been a military Hero, I should have made gunpowder useless ; for I should have blown up all my adversaries by dint of stratagem, turning their own devices upon them.

But these Fathers and Mothers—Lord help 'em ! —Were not the powers of Nature stronger than those of Discretion, and were not that busy *Dea Bona* to afford her genial aids, till tardy Prudence qualified parents to *manage* their future offspring, how few people would have children !

James and Arabella may have *their* motives ; but what can be said for a Father acting as *this* Father has acted ? What for a Mother ? What for an Aunt ? What for Uncles ?—Who can have patience with such fellows and fellow-esses ?

Soon will the Fair-one hear how high their foolish resentments run against her : And then will she, it is to be hoped, have a little more confidence in me. Then will I be jealous that she loves me not with the preference my heart builds upon : Then will I bring her to confessions of grateful Love : And then will I kiss her when I please ; and not stand trembling, as now, like an hungry hound, who sees a delicious morsel within his reach (the froth hanging about his vermilion jaws) yet dares not leap at it for his life.

But I was *originally* a bashful mortal. Indeed I am bashful still with regard to this Lady—Bashful, yet know the Sex so well !—But that indeed is the *reason* that I know it so well :—For, Jack, I have had abundant cause, when I have looked into *myself*, by way of comparison with the *other* Sex, to conclude, that a bashful man has a good deal of the soul of a woman ; and so, like Tiresias, can tell what they think, and what they drive at, as well as themselves.

The modest ones and I, particularly, are pretty much upon a par. The difference between us is only, What They *think*, I *act*. But the immodest ones out-do the worst of us by a bar's length, both in thinking and acting.

One argument let me plead in proof of my assertion ; That even we Rakes love modesty in a woman ; while the modest women as they are accounted (that is to say, the *slyest*) love, and generally prefer, an impudent man. Whence can this be, but from a likeness in nature ? And this made the poet say, That every woman is a Rake in her heart. It concerns them, by their *actions*, to prove the contrary, if they can.

Thus have I read in some of the philosophers, *That no wickedness is comparable to the wickedness of a woman* (a). Canst thou tell me, Jack, who says this ?

(a) Mr. Lovelace is as much out in his conjecture of Solomon, as of Socrates. The Passage is in Ecclesiasticus, chap. xxv.

Was it Socrates? for he had the devil of a Wife—Or who? Or is it Solomon?—*King Solomon*—Thou remembrest to have read of such a king, dost thou not? SOL-O-MON, I learned, in my infant state [My Mother was a good woman] to answer, when asked, *Who was the wisest man?*—But my indulgent questioner never asked me, How he came by the un-inspired part of his wisdom.

Come, come, Jack, you and I are not so very bad, could we but stop where we are.

He then gives the particulars of what passed between him and the Lady on his menaces relating to her Brother and Mr. Selmes, and of his design to punish Betty Barnes and Joseph Leman.

L E T T E R LVI.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, To MISS HOWE.

Friday, April 14.

I WILL now give you the particulars of a conversation that has just passed between Mr. Lovelace and me; which I must call agreeable.

It began with his telling me, that he had just received intelligence, that my friends were on a sudden come to a resolution, to lay aside all thoughts of pursuing me, or of getting me back: And that therefore he attended me to know my pleasure; and what I would do, or have *him* do?

I told him, that I would have him leave me directly; and that, when it was known to every-body that I was absolutely independent of him, it would pass, that I had left my Father's house because of my Brother's ill usage of me: Which was a plea that I might make with justice, and to the excuse of my Father, as well as of myself.

He mildly replied, that if he could be certain,

that my relations would *adhere* to this their new resolution, he could have no objection, since such was my pleasure: But, as he was well assured, that they had taken it only from apprehensions, that a more *active* one might involve my Brother (who had breathed nothing but revenge) in some fatal misfortune, there was too much reason to believe, that they would resume their former purpose the moment they should think they *safely* might.

This, Madam, said he, is a risque I cannot run. You would think it strange if I could. And yet, as soon as I knew they had so given out, I thought it proper to apprise you of it, and to take your commands upon it.

Let me hear, said I, willing to try if he had any particular view, what *you* think most adviseable?

'Tis very easy to say That, if I durst—*If I might not offend you*—If it were not to *break conditions that shall be inviolable with me*.

Say then, Sir, what *you would* say. I can approve or disapprove, as I think fit.

Had not the man a fine opportunity here to speak out?—He had. And thus he used it.

To wave, Madam, what I *would* say till I have more courage to speak out. [*More courage—Mr. Lovelace more courage, my dear!*]—I will only propose what I think will be most agreeable to *you*—Suppose, *if you chuse not to go to Lady Betty's*, that you take a turn cross the country to Windsor?

Why to Windsor?

Because it is a pleasant place: Because it lies in the way either to Berkshire, to Oxford, or to London: *Berkshire*, where Lord M. is at present: *Oxford*, in the neighbourhood of which lives Lady Betty: *London*, whither you may retire at your pleasure: Or, if you will *have* it so, whither I may go, you staying at Windsor; and yet be within an easy

easy distance of you, if any-thing should happen, or if your friends should change their new-taken resolution.

This proposal, however, displeased me not. But I said, My only objection was, the distance of Windsor from Miss Howe, of whom I should be glad to be always within two or three hours reach by a messenger, if possible.

If I had thoughts of any other place than Windsor, or nearer to Miss Howe, he wanted but my commands, and would seek for proper accommodations: But, fix as I pleased, farther or nearer, he had servants, and they had nothing else to do but to obey me.

A grateful thing then he named to me—To send for my Hannah, as soon as I should be fix'd (a); unless I would chuse one of the young gentlewomen *here* to attend me; both of whom, as I had acknowledged, were very obliging; and he knew I had generosity enough to make it worth their while.

This of Hannah, he might see, I took very well. I said, I had thoughts of sending for her, as soon as I got to more convenient lodgings. As to these young gentlewomen, it were pity to break in upon that usefulness which the whole family were of to each other; each having her proper part, and performing it with an agreeable alacrity: Inasmuch that I liked them all so well, that I could even pass my days among them were he to leave me; by which means the lodgings would be more convenient to me than now they were.

He need not repeat his objections to this place, he said: But as to going to Windsor, or where-ever else I thought fit, or as to his personal attendance, or leaving me, he would assure me (he very agree-

(a) See his reasons for proposing Windsor, p. 386, 387 — and her Hannah, p. 390, 391.

ably said) that I could propose nothing in which I thought my reputation, and even my *punctilio*, concerned, that he would not chearfully come into. And since I was so much taken up with my pen, he would instantly order his horse to be got ready, and would set out.

Not to be off my caution, Have you any acquaintance at Windsor? said I.—Know you of any convenient lodgings there?

Except the Forest, replied he, where I have often hunted, I know the least of Windsor, of any place so noted, and so pleasant. Indeed, I have not a single acquaintance there.

Upon the whole, I told him, that I thought his proposal of Windsor not amiss; and that I would remove thither, if I could get a lodging only for myself, and an upper-chamber for Hannah; for that my stock of money was but small, as was easy to be conceived; and I should be very loth to be obliged to any-body. I added, that the sooner I removed the better; for that then he could have no objection to go to London, or Berkshire, as he pleased: And I should let every body know my independence.

He again proposed himself, in very polite terms, for my banker. But I, as civilly, declined his offer.

This conversation was to be, all of it, in the main, agreeable. He asked, whether I would chuse to lodge in the town of Windsor, or out of it?

As near the Castle, I said, as possible, for the convenience of going constantly to the public worship: An opportunity I had been long deprived of.

He should be very glad, he told me, if he could procure me accommodations in any one of the Canons houses; which he imagined would be more agreeable to me than any other, on many accounts. And as he could depend upon my promise, Never to

have

have any other man but himself, on the condition to which he had so chearfully subscribed, he should be easy ; since it was now his part, *in earnest*, to set about recommending himself to my favour, by the *only* way he knew it could be done. Adding, with a very serious air—I am but a young man, Madam ; but I have run a long course : Let not your purity of mind incline you to despise me for the acknowledgement. It is high time to be weary of it, and to reform ; since, like Solomon, I can say, There is nothing new under the Sun : But that it is my belief, that a life of virtue can afford such pleasures, on reflection, as will be for ever blooming, for ever new !

I was agreeably surpris'd. I looked at him, I believe, as if I doubted my ears and my eyes. His aspect however became his words.

I expressed my satisfaction in terms so agreeable to him, that he said, He found a delight in this early dawning of a better day to him, and in my approbation, which he had never received from the success of the most favoured of his pursuits.

Surely, my dear, the man *must* be in earnest. He could not have *said* this ; he could not have *thought* it, had he not. What followed made me still readier to believe him.

In the midst of my wild vagaries, said he, I have ever preserved a reverence for Religion, and for religious men. I always called another cause, when any of my libertine companions, in pursuance of Lord Shaftesbury's test (which is a part of the Rake's Creed, and what I may call *The whetstone of infidelity*) endeavoured to turn the sacred subject into ridicule. On this very account I have been called by good men of the Clergy, who nevertheless would have it, that I was a *practical* Rake, *The decent Rake* : And indeed I had too much pride in my shame, to disown the name of *Rake*. This,

This, Madam, I am the readier to confess, as it may give you hope, that the generous task of my Reformation, which I flatter myself you will have the goodness to undertake, will not be so difficult a one as you may have imagined; for it has afforded me some pleasure in my retired hours, when a temporary remorse has struck me for any thing I have done amiss, that I should *one* day take delight in another course of life: For, unless we *can*, I dare say, no durable *good* is to be expected from the endeavour. Your example, Madam, must do all, must confirm all (a).

The divine Grace, or Favour, Mr. Lovelace, must do All, and confirm All. You know not how much you please me, that I can talk to you in this dialect.

And I then thought of his generosity to his pretty Rustic; and of his kindness to his Tenants.

Yet, Madam, be pleased to remember one thing: Reformation cannot be a *sudden* work. I have infinite vivacity: It is That which runs away with me. Judge, dearest Madam, by what I am going to confess, that I have a prodigious way to journey on, before a good person will think me tolerable; since, tho' I have read in some of our *Perfectionists* enough to make a better man than myself either run into madness or despair about the Grace you mention; yet I cannot enter into the meaning of the word, nor into the *modus* of its operation. Let me not then be checked, when I mention *your* example for my *visible* reliance; and instead of using such words, till I can better understand them, suppose all the rest included in the profession of *that* reliance.

I told him, that, altho' I was somewhat concerned at his expression, and surprised at so much *darkness*,

(a) That he proposes one day to reform, and that he has sometimes good motions, see Vol. I. p. 225, 226.

as (for want of another word) I would call it, in a man of his talents and learning; yet I was pleased with his Ingenuity. I wished him to encourage this way of thinking. I told him, that his observation, that no *durable* good was to be expected from any new course where there was not a *delight* taken in it, was just: But that the delight would follow by use.

And twenty things of this sort I even *preached* to him; taking care, however, not to be tedious, nor to let my expanded heart give him a contracted or impatient brow. And, indeed, he took visible pleasure in what I said, and even hung upon the subject, when I, to try him, once or twice, seemed ready to drop it: And proceeded to give me a most agreeable instance, that he could at times think both deeply and seriously.—Thus it was.

He was once, he said, dangerously wounded in a duel, in the left arm, baring it, to shew me the Scar: That this (notwithstanding a great effusion of blood, it being upon an artery) was followed by a violent fever, which at last fix'd upon his spirits; and *that* so obstinately, that neither did *he* desire life, nor his *friends* expect it: That, for a month together, his heart, as he thought, was so totally changed, that he despised his former courses, and particularly that rashness, which had brought him to the state he was in, and his antagonist (who, however, was the aggressor) into a much worse: That in this space he had thoughts which at times still give him pleasure to reflect upon: And altho' these promising prospects changed, as he recovered health and spirits, yet he parted with them with so much reluctance, that he could not help shewing it in a copy of verses, *truly blank* ones, he said; some of which he repeated, and (advantaged by the grace which he gives to every-thing he repeats) I thought them very tolerable ones; the sentiments, however, much graver than I expected from him. He

He has promised me a copy of the lines ; and then I shall judge better of their merit ; and so shall you. The tendency of them was, " That, since sickness only gave him a proper train of thinking, and that his restored health brought with it a return of his evil habits, he was ready to renounce the gifts of Nature for those of Contemplation."

He farther declared, that altho' these good motions went off (as he had owned) on his recovery, yet he had better hopes now, from the influence of my example, and from the reward before him, if he persevered : And that he was the more hopeful that he should, as his present resolution was made in a full tide of health and spirits ; and when he had nothing to wish for but perseverance, to intitle himself to my favour.

I will not throw cold water, Mr. Lovelace, said I, on a rising flame : But look to it ! For I shall endeavour to keep you up to this spirit. I shall measure your value of me by this test : And I would have you bear those charming lines of Mr. Rowe for ever in your mind ; you, who have, by your own confession, so much to repent of ; and as the Scar, indeed, you shewed me, will, in one instance, remind you to your dying day.

The lines, my dear, are from that Poet's Ulysses. You have heard me often admire them ; and I repeated them to him :

*Habitual evils change not on a sudden ;
But many days must pass, and many sorrows ;
Conscious remorse and anguish must be felt,
To curb desire, to break the stubborn will,
And work a second nature in the soul,
Ere Virtue can resume the place she lost :*
'Tis else DISSIMULATION —

He

He had often read these lines, he said ; but never *tasted* them before.—By his *Soul* (the unmortified creature swore) and as *he hoped to be saved*, he was *now* in earnest in his good resolutions. He had said, *before* I repeated these lines from Rowe, that habitual evils could not be changed on a *sudden* : But he hoped, he should not be thought a *dissembler*, if he were not enabled to *bold* his good purposes ; since ingratitude and dissimulation were vices that of all others he abhorred.

May you ever abhor them ! said I. They are the most odious of all vices.

I hope, my dear Miss Howe, I shall not have occasion, in my future Letters, to contradict these promising appearances. Should I have *nothing* on his side to combat with, I shall be very far from being happy, from the sense of my fault, and the indignation of all my relations.—So shall not fail of condign punishment for it, from my inward remorse on account of my forfeited character. But the least ray of hope could not dart in upon me, without my being willing to lay hold of the very first opportunity to communicate it to *you*, who take so generous a share in all my concerns.

Nevertheless, you may depend upon it, my dear, that these agreeable assurances, and hopes of his begun Reformation, shall not make me forget my caution. Not that I think, at worst, any more than you, that he dare to harbour a thought injurious to my honour : But he is very various, and there is an *apparent*, and even an *acknowledged* unfixedness in his temper, which at times, gives me uneasiness. I am resolved therefore to keep him at distance from my person and my thoughts, as much as I can : For whether *all* men are or are not incroachers, I am sure Mr. Lovelace is one.

Hence it is, that I have always cast about, and
will

will continue to cast about, what ends he may have in view from *this* proposal, or from *that* report. In a word, tho' hopeful of the *best*, I will always be fearful of the *worst*, in every-thing that admits of doubt. For it is better, in such a situation as mine, to apprehend, without cause, than to subject myself to surprize for want of forethought.

Mr. Lovelace is gone to Windsor, having left two servants to attend me. He purposes to be back to-morrow.

I have written to my Aunt Hervey, to supplicate her interest in my behalf, for my cloaths, books, and money; signifying to her, 'That, if I may be restored to the favour of my family, and allowed a Negative only, as to any man who may be proposed to me, and be used like a Daughter, a Niece, and a Sister, I will stand by my offer to live single, and submit, as I ought, to a Negative from my Father.' Intimating nevertheless, 'That it were perhaps better, after the usage I have received from my Brother and Sister, that I may be allowed to be distant from them, as well for their sakes as for my own' (meaning, as I suppose it will be taken, at my Dairy-house)—offering 'to take my Father's directions, as to the manner I shall live in, the servants I shall have, and in every-thing that shall shew the dutiful subordination to which I am willing to conform.'

My Aunt will know by my Letter to my Sister how to direct to me, if she be permitted to favour me with a line.

I am equally earnest with *her* in *this* Letter, as I was with my *Sister* in *That* I wrote to *her*, to obtain for me a speedy Reconciliation, that I may not be further precipitated; intimating, 'That, by a timely lenity, all may pass for a misunderstanding only, which, otherwise, will be thought equally disgraceful

• graceful to them, and to me ; appealing to her for
 • the necessity I was under to do what I did.'—

• Had I owned, that I was over-reached, and
 • forced away against my intention, might they not,
 • as a proof of the truth of my assertion, have in-
 • sisted upon my immediate return to them ? And
 • if I did *not* return, would they not have reason to
 • suppose, that I had *now* altered my mind (if such
 • *were* my mind) or had not the *power* to return ?—
 • Then were I to have gone back, must it not have
 • been upon their own terms ? *No conditioning with*
 • *a Father !* is a maxim with my Father, and with
 • my Uncles. If I would have gone, Mr. Lovelace
 • would have opposed it. So I must have been un-
 • der his controul, or have run away *from* him, as it
 • is supposed I did *to* him from Harlowe-Place.
 • In what a giddy light would this have made me
 • appear !—Had he constrained me, could I have
 • appealed to my friends for *their* protection, with-
 • out risking the very consequences, to prevent
 • which (setting up myself presumptuously, as a
 • middle person between flaming spirits) I have run
 • into such terrible inconveniencies ?

• But, after all, must it not give me great anguish
 • of mind, to be forced to sanctify, as I may say,
 • by my seeming *after*-approbation, a measure I was
 • so artfully tricked into, and which I was so much
 • resolved not to take ?

• How one evil brings on another, is sorrowfully
 • witnessed to, by

Your ever-obliged and affectionate

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

She is very apprehensive of me, I feel I have dis-
 tressed her and Miss Howe, as often as I have been
 with them, to pass for a giddy thoughtless creature.

LET-

LETTER LVII.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq.

Friday, April 14.

THOU hast often reproached me, Jack, with my vanity, without distinguishing the humorous turn that accompanies it; and for which, at the same time that thou robbest me of the merit of it, thou admirest me highly. *Envy* gives thee the *indistinction*: *Nature* inspires the *admiration*: Unknown to thyself it inspires it. But thou art too clumsy and too short-sighted a mortal, to know how to account even for the impulses by which thou thyself art moved.

Well, but this acquits thee not of my charge of vanity, Lovelace, methinks thou sayest.

And true thou sayest: For I have indeed a confounded parcel of it. But, if men of parts may not be allowed to be vain, who should? And yet, upon second thoughts, men of parts have the least occasion of any to be vain; since the world (so few of *them* are there in it) are ready to find them out, and extol them. If a fool can be made sensible, that there is a man who has more understanding than *himself*, he is ready enough to conclude, that such a man must be a very extraordinary creature.

And what, at this rate, is the general conclusion to be drawn from the premises?—Is it not, That *no* man ought to be vain? But what if a man can't help it!—This, perhaps, may be *my* case. But there is nothing on which I value myself so much as upon my *Inventions*. And, for the soul of me, I cannot help letting it be seen, that I *do*. Yet this vanity may be a means, perhaps, to overthrow me with this sagacious Lady.

She is very apprehensive of me, I see. I have flattered before her and Miss Howe, as often as I have been with them, to pass for a giddy thoughtless creature.

What

What a folly then to be so *expatiatingly* sincere, in my answer to her home Put, upon the noises within the garden?—But such success having attended that contrivance [Success, Jack, has blown many a man up!] my cursed *vanity* got uppermost, and kept down my *caution*. The menace to have secreted Solmes, and that other, that I had thoughts to run away with her foolish Brother, and of my project to revenge her upon the two servants, so much terrified the dear creature, that I was forced to sit down to muse after means to put myself right in her opinion.

Some favourable incidents, at the time, tumbled in from my agent in her family; at least such as I was determined to *make* favourable: And therefore I desired admittance; and this before she could resolve anything against me; that is to say, while her admiration of my intrepidity kept resolution in suspense.

Accordingly, I prepared myself to be all gentleness, all obligingness, all serenity; and as I have now-and-then, and always *bad*, more or less, good motions pop up in my mind, I encouraged and collected every thing of this sort that I had ever had from Novicehood to Maturity [*Not long in recollecting, Jack!*] in order to bring the dear creature into good humour with me (a): And who knows, thought I, if I can hold it, and proceed, but I may be able to lay a foundation fit to build my grand scheme upon?—LOVE, thought I, is not *naturally* a doubter: FEAR is: I will try to banish the latter: Nothing then but Love will remain. CREDULITY is the God of Love's *prime minister*; and they never are asunder.

He then acquaints his friend with what passed between him and the Lady, in relation to his advices from Harlowe-Place, and to his proposal about lodgings,

(a) He had said, p. 354. that he would make Reformation of his Stalking-horse, &c.

pretty much to the same purpose as in her preceding Letter.

When he comes to mention his proposal of the Windsor lodgings, thus he expresses himself.

Now, Belford, can it enter into thy leaden head, what I meant by this proposal?—I know it cannot. And so I'll tell thee.

To leave her for a day or two, with a view *to serve her by my absence*, would, as I thought, look like confiding in her-favour. I could not think of leaving her, thou knowest, while I had reason to believe her friends would pursue us; and I began to apprehend, that she would suspect, that I made a pretence of that intentional pursuit, to keep about her and with her. But now that they had declared against it, and that they would *not* receive her if she went back (a declaration she had better hear first from me, than from Miss Howe, or any other) what should hinder me from giving her this mark of my obedience; especially as I could leave Will, who is a clever fellow, and can do any-thing but write and spell, and Lord M's Jonas (not as guards, to be sure, but as attendants only); the latter to be dispatched to me occasionally by the former, whom I could acquaint with my motions?

Then I wanted to inform myself, why I had not congratulatory Letters from Lady Sarah and Lady Betty, and from my cousins Montague, to whom I had written, glorying in my Beloved's escape; which Letters, if properly worded, might be made necessary to shew her as matters proceed.

As to Windsor, I had no design to carry her particularly thither: But somewhere it was proper to name, as she condescended to ask my advice about it. London, I durst not; but very cautiously; and so as to make it her own option: For I must tell thee, that there is such a perverseness in the Sex, that, when they ask your advice, they do it only to know your
opinion,

opinion, that they may oppose it; tho', had not the thing in question been *your* choice, perhaps it had been *theirs*.

I could easily give reasons *against* Windsor, after I had pretended to be there; and this would have looked the better, as it was a place of my own nomination; and shewn her, that I had no fix'd scheme, Never was there in woman such a sagacious, such an all-alive apprehension, as in this. Yet it is a grievous thing to an honest man to be suspected.

Then, in my going or return, I can call upon Mrs. Greme. She and my Beloved had a great deal of talk together. If I knew what it was about; and that *Either*, upon their first acquaintance, was for benefiting herself by the *Other*; I might contrive to serve them *both*, without hurting *myself*: For these are the most prudent ways of doing friendships, and what are not followed by regrets, tho' the *Serve-ed* should prove ingrateful. Then Mrs. Greme corresponds by pen and ink with her Farmer-sister where we are: Something may possibly arise *that way*, either of a convenient nature, *which I may pursue*; or of an inconvenient, *which I may avoid*.

Always be careful of back-doors, is a maxim with me in all my exploits. Whoever knows me, knows that I am no proud man. I can talk as familiarly to servants as to principals, when I have a mind to make it worth their while to oblige me in any-thing. Then servants are but as the common soldiers in an army: They do all the mischief; frequently without malice, and merely, *good souls!* for mischief-sake.

I am most apprehensive about Miss Howe. She has a confounded deal of wit, and wants only a subject, to shew as much roguery: And should I be outwitted, with all my sententious, boasting conceit of my own *nostrum-mongership*—[*I love to plague thee, who art a pretender to accuracy, and a surface-skimmer in learn-*

ing, with out-of-the-way words and phrases] I should certainly hang, drown, or shoot myself.

Poor Hickman! I pity him for the prospect he has with such a virago! But the fellow's a fool, God wot! And now I think of it, it is absolutely necessary for complete happiness in the married State, that one *should* be a fool (an argument I once held with this very Miss Howe). But then the fool should *know* that he is so, else the obstinate one will disappoint the wise one.

But my agent Joseph has helped me to secure this quarter, as I have hinted to thee more than once.

L E T T E R LVIII.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;

In Continuation.

BUT is it not a confounded thing, that I cannot fasten an obligation upon this proud Beauty? I have two motives, in endeavouring to prevail upon her to accept of Money and Raiment from me: One, the real pleasure I should have in the accommodating of the haughty maid; and to think there was something near her, and upon her, that I could call *mine*: The other, in order to abate her severity, and humble her a little.

Nothing sooner brings down a proud spirit, than a sense of lying under pecuniary obligations. This has always made me solicitous to avoid laying myself under any such: Yet sometimes formerly have I been put to it, and cursed the tardy revolution of the quarterly periods. And yet I ever made shift to avoid anticipations: *I never would eat the calf in the cow's belly*, as Lord M's phrase is: For what is that, but to hold our Lands upon *Tenant-courtesy*, the vilest of all Tenures? To be denied a fox-chace, for fear of breaking down a fence, upon my own grounds? To be clamoured-at for repairs *studied* for, rather than *really*

really wanted? To be prated to by a bumkin with his hat on, and his arms folded, as if he defied your expectations of that sort; his foot firmly fix'd, as if upon his own ground; and you forced to take his arch leers, and stupid gybes; he intimating by the whole of his conduct, that he had had it in his power to oblige you, and, if you behave civilly, may oblige you again?—I, who think I have a right to break every man's head I pass by, if I like not his looks, to bear this!—No more could I do it, than I could borrow of an insolent Uncle, or inquisitive Aunt, who would thence think themselves intitled to have an account of all my life and actions laid before them for their review and censure.

My Charmer, I see, has a pride like my own: But she has no *distinction* in her pride: Nor knows the pretty fool, that there is nothing nobler, nothing more delightful, than for Lovers to be conferring and receiving obligations from each other. In this very Farm-yard, to give thee a familiar instance, I have more than once seen this remark illustrated. A strutting rascal of a cock have I beheld chuck, chuck, chuck, chuck-ing his mistress to him, when he has found a single barley-corn, taking it up with his bill, and letting it drop five or six times, still repeating his chucking invitation: And when two or three of his feathered ladies strive who shall be the first for't [*O Jack! a Cock is a Grand Signor of a Bird!*] he directs the bill of the foremost to it; and, when she has got the dirty pearl, he struts over her with an erected crest, and with an exulting chuck—a chuck-aw-aw-w, circling round her, with dropt wings, sweeping the dust in humble courtship: While the obliged She, half-shy, half-willing, by her cowering tail, prepared wings, yet seemingly affrighted eyes, and contracted neck, lets one see, that she knows the barley-corn was not all he called her for.

When he comes to that part of his narrative, where he mentions the proposing of the Lady's maid Hannah, or one of the young Sorlings's, to attend her, thus he writes:

Now, Belford, canst thou imagine what I meant by proposing Hannah, or one of the girls here, for her attendant? I'll give thee a month to guess.

Thou wilt not pretend to guess, thou say'st.

Well, then, I'll tell thee.

Believing she would certainly propose to have that favourite wench about her, as soon as she was a little settled, I had caused the girl to be inquired after, with an intent to make interest, some how or other, that a month's warning should be insisted on by her master or mistress, or by some other means, which I had not determined upon, to prevent her coming to her. But fortune fights for me. The wench is luckily ill; a violent rheumatic disorder, which has obliged her to leave her place, confines her to her chamber: Poor Hannah! How I pity the girl! These things are very hard upon industrious servants!—I intend to make the poor wench a small present on the occasion—I know it will oblige my Charmer.

And so, Jack, *pretending not to know any thing of the matter*, I pressed her to send for Hannah. She knew I had always a regard for this servant, because of her honest love to her Lady: But *now* I have a greater regard for her than ever. Calamity, tho' a poor servant's calamity, will rather increase than diminish good-will, with a truly generous master or mistress.

As to one of the young Sorlings's attendance, there was nothing at all in proposing that; for if either of them had been chosen by *her*, and permitted by the *Mother*. [*Two chances in That!*] it would have been only till I had fix'd upon another. And if afterwards they had been loth to part, I could easily have given
my

my Beloved a jealousy, which would have done the business; or to the girl, who would have quitted her *Country dairy*, such a relish for a *London one*, as would have made it very convenient for her to fall in love with Will; or perhaps I could have done still better for her with Lord M's Chaplain, who is very desirous of standing well with his Lord's presumptive heir.

A blessing on thy honest heart, Lovelace! thou'lt say; for thou art for providing for every-body.

He gives an account of the serious part of their conversation, with no great variation from the Lady's account of it: And when he comes to that part of it, where he bids her remember, that Reformation cannot be a sudden thing, he asks his friend;

Is not this fair play? Is it not dealing ingenuously? Then the observation, I will be bold to say, is founded in *truth and nature*. But there was a little touch of *policy* in it besides; that the Lady, if I should fly out again, should not think me too gross an hypocrite: For, as I plainly told her, I was afraid, that my fits of Reformation were *but* Fits and Sallies; but I hoped her Example would fix them into Habits. But it is so discouraging a thing, to have my monitress so very good!—I protest I know not how to look up at her! Now, as I am thinking, if I could pull her down a little nearer to my own level; that is to say, could prevail upon her to do something that would argue *imperfection*, something *to repent of*; we should jog on much more equally, and be better able to comprehend one another: And so the comfort would be mutual, and the remorse not all on one side.

He acknowledges, that he was greatly affected and pleased with the Lady's serious arguments at the time: But even then was apprehensive that his temper would not hold. Thus he writes;

This Lady says serious things in so agreeable a manner (and then her voice is all harmony when she touches a subject she is pleased with) that I could have listened to her for half a day together. But yet I am afraid, if she *falls*, as they call it, she will lose a good deal of that *pathos*, of that noble self-confidence, which gives a good person, as I now see, a visible superiority over one *not* so good.

But, after all, Belford, I would fain know why people call such free-livers as you and me *hypocrites*.—That's a word I hate; and should take it very ill to be called by it. For myself, I have as good motions, and perhaps have them as frequently, as any-body: All the business is, they don't hold; or, to speak more in character, *I don't take the care some do, to conceal my lapses.*

LETTER LIX.

MISS HOWE, To MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Saturday, April 15.

THOUGH pretty much pressed in time, and oppressed by my Mother's watchfulness, I will write a few lines upon the new light that has broke in upon your gentleman; and send it by a particular hand.

I know not what to think of him upon it. He talks well; but judge him by Rowe's lines, he is certainly a *dissembler*, odious as the sin of Hypocrisy, and, as he says, that other of Ingratitude, are to him.

And pray, my dear, let me ask, Could he have triumphed, as it is said he has done, over so many of our Sex, had he not been egregiously guilty of *both* sins?

His Ingenuoufness is the thing that staggers me: Yet is he cunning enough to know, that whoever accuses himself first, blunts the edge of an adversary's accusation.

He

He is certainly a man of sense: There is more hope of such a one, than of a fool: And there must be a *beginning* to a Reformation. These I will allow in his favour.

But this, that follows, I think, is the only way to judge of his specious confessions and self-accusations—Does he confess any-thing that you knew not before, or that you are not likely to find out from others?—If nothing else, what does he confess to his own disadvantage? You have heard of his Duels: You have heard of his Seductions.—All the world has. He *owns* therefore what it would be to no purpose to *conceal*; and his Ingenuoufness is a Salvo—‘Why, this, Madam, is no more than Mr. Lovelace *himself* acknowledges.’

Well, but, what is now to be done?—You must make the best of your situation: And as you say, so say I, I hope that will not be bad: For I like all that he has proposed to you of Windsor, and his Canon’s house. His readiness to leave you, and go himself in quest of a lodging, likewise looks well. And I think there is nothing can be so properly done, as (whether you get to a Canon’s house or not) that the Canon should join you together in wedlock as soon as possible.

I much approve, however, of all your cautions, of all your vigilance, and of every-thing you have done, but of your *meeting him*. Yet, in my disapprobation of that, I judge by the *event* only; for who would have divined, it would have concluded as it did? But he is the devil, by his own account: And had he run away with the wretched Solmes, and your more wretched Brother, and been himself transported for life, he should have had my free consent for all three.

What use does he make of that Joseph Leman!—His Ingenuoufness, I must once more say, confounds me; but if, my dear, you can forgive your Brother
for

for the part he put that fellow upon acting, I don't know whether you ought to be angry at Lovelace: Yet I have wished fifty times, since Lovelace got you away, that you were rid of him, whether it were by a burning Fever, by Hanging, by Drowning, or by a broken Neck; provided it were before he laid you under a necessity to go into mourning for him.

I repeat my hitherto-rejected offer. May I send it safely by your old man? I have reasons for not sending it by Hickman's servant; unless I had a Bank Note. Inquiring for such may cause distrust. My Mother is so busy, so inquisitive—I don't love suspicious tempers.

And here she is continually in and out—I must break off.

Mr. Hickman begs his most respectful compliments to you, with offers of his services. I told him I would oblige him, because minds in trouble take kindly any-body's civilities: But that he was not to imagine that he particularly obliged me by this; since I should think the man or woman either blind or stupid who admired not a person of your exalted merit for your own sake, and wished not to serve you without view to other reward than the honour of serving you.

To be sure, that was his principal motive, with great daintiness he said it: But with a kiss of his hand, and a bow to my feet, he hoped, that that fine Lady's being *my friend* did not lessen the merit of the reverence he really had for her.

Believe me ever, what you, my dear, shall ever find me,

Your faithful and affectionate

ANNA HOWE.

LET.

LETTER LX.

*Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, To Miss HOWE.**Sat. Afternoon.*

I Detain your messenger while I write in answer to yours; the poor old man not being very well.

You dishearten me a good deal about Mr. Lovelace. I may be too willing from my sad circumstances, to think the best of him. If his pretences to Reformation are *but* pretences, what must be his intent? But can the heart of man be so very vile? Can he, *dare* he, mock the Almighty? But may I not, from one very sad reflection, think better of him; That I am thrown too much into his power, to make it *necessary* for him (except he were to intend the *very utmost* villainy by me) to be such a shocking hypocrite? He must, at least, be in earnest, at the *time* he gives the better hopes. Surely he must. You yourself must join with me in this hope, or you could not wish me to be so dreadfully yoked.

But after all, I had rather, much rather, be independent of him, and of his family, altho' I have an high opinion of them; at least till I see what my own may be brought to.—Otherwise, I think, it were best for me, at once, to cast myself into Lady Betty's protection. All would then be conducted with decency, and perhaps many mortifications would be spared me. But then I must be *his*, at all adventures, and be thought to defy my own family. And shall I not first see the issue of *one* application? And yet I cannot make this, till I am settled somewhere, and at a distance from him.

Mrs. Sorlings shewed me a Letter this morning, which she had received from her Sister Greme last night; in which Mrs. Greme (hoping I will forgive her forward zeal, if her Sister thinks fit to shew her

Letter

Letter to me) 'wishes (and that for all the noble family's sake, and she hopes she may say for my own) that I will be pleased to yield to make his Honour, as she calls him, happy.' She grounds her *officiousness*, as she calls it, upon what he was so *condescending* (her word also) to say to her yesterday, in his way to Windsor, on her *presuming* to ask, If she might soon give him joy: 'That no man ever loved a woman as he loves me: That no woman ever so well deserved to be beloved: That in every conversation, he admires me still more: That he loves me with such a purity, as he had never believed himself capable of, or that a mortal creature could have inspired him with; looking upon me as all *soul*; as an angel sent down to save *his*;' and a great deal more of this sort: 'But that he apprehends, my consent to make him happy is at a greater distance than he wishes. And complained of the too severe restrictions I had laid upon him before I honoured him with my *confidence*: Which restrictions *must be as sacred to him, as if they were parts of the Marriage-contract, &c.*'

What, my dear, shall I say to this? How shall I take it? Mrs. Greeme is a good woman. Mrs. Sorlings is a good woman. And this Letter agrees with the conversation between Mr. Lovelace and me, which I thought, and still think, so agreeable (a). Yet what means the man by *foregoing the opportunities he has had to declare himself*?—What mean his *complaints of my restrictions* to Mrs. Greeme? He is not a bashful man.—But you say, I inspire people with an awe of me.—An awe, my dear!—As how?

I am quite petulant, fretful and peevish, with myself, at times, to find, that I am bound to see the workings of this *subtle*, or this *giddy* spirit; which shall I call it?

(a) This Letter Mrs. Greeme (with a good intention) was put upon writing by Mr. Lovelace himself, as will be seen Vol. III. p. 17.

How am I punished, as I frequently think, for my vanity, in hoping to be an *Example* to young persons of my Sex! Let me be but a *Warning*, and I will now be contented. For, be my destiny what it may, I shall never be able to hold up my head again among my best friends and worthiest companions.

It is one of the cruellest circumstances that attends the faults of the Inconsiderate, that she makes all who love her unhappy, and gives joy only to her own enemies, and to the enemies of her family.

What an useful lesson would this afford, were it properly inculcated at the time that the *tempted mind* was balancing upon a doubtful adventure?

You know not, my dear, the worth of a virtuous man; and, noble-minded as you are in most particulars, you partake of the common weakness of human nature, in being apt to slight what is in your own power.

You would not think of using Mr. Lovelace, were he your suitor, as you do the much worthier Mr. Hickman—Would you?—You know who says in my mother's case, 'Much *will* bear, much *shall* bear, all the world through (a).'

Mr. Hickman, I fancy, would be glad to know the Lady's name, who made such an observation. He would think it hardly possible, but such a one should benefit by her own remark; and would be apt to wish his Miss Howe acquainted with her.

Gentleness of heart, surely, is not despicable in a man. Why, if it be, is the highest distinction a man can arrive at, that of a *Gentleman*?—A distinction which a Prince may not deserve. For Manners, more than Birth, Fortune, or Title, are requisite in this character. Manners are indeed the essence of it. And shall it be generally said, and Miss Howe not be an exception to it (as once you wrote) that our Sex are best dealt with by boistrous and unruly spirits (b)?

(a) Vol. I. p. 56.

(b) Ibid. p. 321.

Forgive me, my dear ; and love me as you used to do. For altho' my Fortunes are changed, my Heart is not: Nor ever will, while it bids my pen tell you, that it must cease to beat, when it is not as much yours, as

Your

CLARISSA HARLOWE'S.

LETTER LXI.

Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, To Miss HOWE.

Saturday Evening.

MR. Lovelace has seen divers apartments at Windsor; but not one, he says, that he thought fit for me, and which at the same time answered my description.

He has been very solicitous to keep to the Letter of my instructions: Which looks well: And the better I liked him, as, altho' he proposed that town, he came back, dissuading me from it: For he said, that, in his journey from thence, he had thought Windsor, altho' of his own proposal, a wrong choice; because I coveted privacy, and that was a place generally visited and admired (a).

I told him, that if Mrs. Sorlings thought me not an incumbrance, I would be willing to stay here a little longer; provided he would leave me, and go to Lord M's, or to London, which-ever he thought best.

He hoped, he said, that he might suppose me absolutely safe from the insults or attempts of my Brother; and therefore, if it would make me easier, he would obey, for a few days at least.

He again proposed to send for Hannah. I told him I designed to do so, thro' you—And shall I beg

(a) This inference of the Lady in his favour, is exactly what he had hoped for. See p. 387.

of

of you, my dear, to cause the honest creature to be sent to? Your faithful Robert, I think, knows where she is. Perhaps she will be permitted to quit her place directly, by allowing a month's wages, which I will repay her.

He took notice of the serious humour he found me in, and of the redness of my eyes. I had just been answering your Letter; and had he not approached me, on his coming off his journey, in a very respectful manner; had he not made an unexceptionable report of his inquiries, and been so ready to go from me, at the very first word; I was prepared (notwithstanding the good terms we parted upon when he set out for Windsor) to have given him a very unwelcome reception: For the contents of your last Letter had so affected me, that the moment I saw him, I beheld with indignation the seducer, who had been the cause of all the evils I suffer, and have suffered.

He hinted to me, that he had received a Letter from Lady Betty, and another (as I understood him) from one of the Miss Montagues. If they take notice of *me* in them, I wonder that he did not acquaint me with the contents. I am afraid, my dear, that his relations are among those, who think I have taken a rash and inexcusable step. It is not to my credit to let *even them* know, how I have been *frighted out of myself*: And yet perhaps they would hold me unworthy of their alliance, if they were to think my flight a voluntary one? O my dear, how uneasy to us are our reflections upon every doubtful occurrence, when we know we have been prevailed upon to do a wrong thing!

Sunday Morning.

• Ah! this man, my dear! We have had warmer dialogues than ever yet we have had. At fair argument,

gument, I find I need not fear him (*a*): But he is such a wild, such an ungovernable creature [*He reformed!*] that I am half-afraid of him.

He again, on my declaring myself uneasy at his stay with me here, proposed that I would put myself into Lady Betty's protection; assuring me that he thought he could not leave me at Mrs. Sorlings's, with safety to myself. And upon my declining to do that, for the reasons I gave you in my last (*b*), he urged me to make a demand of my Estate.

He knew it, I told him, to be my resolution not to litigate with my Father.

Nor would he put me upon it, he replied, but as the *last* thing. But if my spirit would not permit me to be *obliged*, as I called it, to any-body; and yet if my relations would refuse me my own; he knew not how I could keep up that spirit, without being put to inconveniencies, which would give him infinite concern—Unless—unless—unless, he said, hesitating, as if afraid to speak out—Unless I would take the only method I *could* take, to obtain the possession of my own.

What is *that*, Sir?

Sure the man saw by my looks, when he came with his creeping *Unless's*, that I guessed what he meant.

Ah! Madam, can you be at a loss to know what that method is?—They will not dispute with a *man* that right which they would contest with *you*.

Why said he with a *man*, instead of with *him*? Yet he looked as if he wanted to be encouraged to say more.

So, Sir, you would have me employ a Lawyer, would you, notwithstanding what I have ever declared, as to litigating with my Papa?

(*a*) See this confirmed by Mr. Lovelace, p. 314:

(*b*) See p. 395.

: No,

• No, I would not, my dearest Creature, snatch-
 • ing my hand, and pressing it with his lips—ex-
 • cept you would make *me* the Lawyer.

• Had he said *me* at first, I should have been above
 • the affectation of mentioning a Lawyer.

• I blushed. The man pursued not the subject
 • so ardently, but that it was more easy as well as
 • more natural to avoid it, than to fall into it.

• Would to Heaven he might, without offend-
 • ing!—But I *so* over-awed him!—[*Over-awed*
 • him—*Your* (*a*) notion, my dear!] And so the
 • over-awed, bashful man went off from the subject,
 • repeating his proposal, that I would demand my
 • own Estate, or impower some man of the Law to
 • demand it, if I *would not* (he put in) impower a
 • happier man to demand it. But it could not be
 • amiss, he thought, to acquaint my two Trustees,
 • that I intended to assume it.

• I should know better what to do, I told him, when
 • he was at a distance from me, and *known* to be
 • so. I suppose, Sir, that if my Father propose my
 • return, and engage never to mention Solmes to
 • me, nor any other man, but by *my consent*, and I
 • agree upon that condition to think no more of *you*,
 • you will acquiesce.

• I was willing to try whether he had the regard
 • to *all* my previous declarations, which he pretended
 • to have to *some* of them.

• He was struck all of a heap.

• What say you, Mr. Lovelace? You know, all
 • you mean is for my good. Surely I am my own
 • mistress: Surely I need not ask your leave to
 • make what terms I please for myself, *so long as I*
 • *break none with you?*

• He hemm'd twice or thrice.--Why, Madam, Why,
 • Madam, I cannot say—Then pausing—and rising

(*a*) See p. 354. and 356.

from his seat, with petulance: I see plainly enough, said he, the reason why none of my proposals can be accepted: At *last* I am to be a sacrifice to your reconciliation with your implacable family.

It has always been your respectful way, Mr. Lovelace, to treat my family in this free manner. But pray, Sir, when you call *others* implacable, see that you deserve not the same censure *yourself*.

He must needs say, there was no love lost between some of my family and him; but he had not deserved of *them* what they had of *him*.

Yourself being judge, I suppose, Sir?

All the world, you yourself, Madam, being judge.

Then, Sir, let me tell you, had you been less upon your defiance, they would not have been irritated so much against you. But nobody ever heard, that avowed despite to the Relations of a person was a proper courtship either to that person, or to her friends.

Well, Madam, all that I know, is, that their malice against me is such, that, if you determine to sacrifice *me*, you may be reconciled when you please.

And all that I know, Sir, is, that if I do give my Father the power of a negative, and he will be contented with *that*, it will be but my *duty* to give it him; and if I preserve one to myself, I shall break thro' no obligation to *you*.

Your duty to your capricious *Brother*, not to your *Father*, you mean, Madam.

If the dispute lay between my Brother and me at *first*, surely, Sir, a Father may chuse which party he will take.

He *may*, Madam—But that exempts him not from blame for all that, if he take the wrong—

Different people will judge differently, Mr. Lovelace, of the right and the wrong. *You* judge as you please. Shall not others as *they* please!

And

• And who has a right to controul a Father's judgment in his own family, and in relation to his own child?

• I know, Madam, there is no arguing with you. But nevertheless I had hoped to have made myself some little merit with you, so as that I might not have been the *preliminary sacrifice* to a Reconciliation.

• Your hopes, Sir, had been better grounded, if you had had my consent to my abandoning of my Father's house—

• Always, Madam, and for ever, to be reminded of the choice you would have made of that damn'd Solmes—rather than—

• Not so hasty! Not so rash, Mr. Lovelace! I am convinced, that there was no intention to marry me to that Solmes on Wednesday.

• So I am told they now give out, in order to justify themselves at your expence. Every-body living, Madam, is obliged to you for your kind thoughts, but I.

• Excuse me, *good* Mr. Lovelace (waving my hand, and bowing) that I am willing to think the best of my Father.

• Charming Creature! said he, with what a bewitching air is that said!—And with a vehemence in his manner, would have snatched my hand. But I withdrew it, being much offended with him.

• I think, Madam, my sufferings for your sake might have intitled me to some favour.

• My sufferings, Sir, for *your* impetuous temper, set against *your* sufferings for *my* sake, I humbly conceive, leave me very little your debtor.

• Lord! Madam, [assuming a drolling air] What have *you* suffered!—Nothing but what you can easily forgive. You have been *only* made a prisoner in your Father's house, by the way of doing credit to your judgment!—You have *only* had an

• innocent and faithful servant turned out of your
 • service, because you loved her—You have *only* had
 • your Sister's confident servant set over you, with
 • leave to teaze and affront you!—

• Very well, Sir!

• You have *only* had an insolent Brother take upon
 • him to treat you like a slave, and as insolent a
 • Sister to undermine you in every-body's favour,
 • on pretence to keep you out of hands, which, if as
 • vile as they vilely report, are not, however, half
 • so vile and cruel as their own!

• Go on, Sir, if you please!

• You have *only* been persecuted, in order to
 • oblige you to have a sordid fellow, whom you
 • have professed to hate, and whom every-body de-
 • spises! The Licence has been *only* got! The Parson
 • has *only* been held in readiness! The day, a near,
 • a *very* near day, has been *only* fixed! And you
 • were *only* to be searched for your correspondencies,
 • and still closer confined, till the day came, in order
 • to deprive you of all means of escaping the snare
 • laid for you!—But all This you can forgive! You
 • can wish you had stood all This; inevitable as
 • the compulsion must have been!—And the man
 • who at the hazard of his life, has delivered you
 • from all these mortifications, is the only person you
 • *cannot* forgive!

• Can't you go on, Sir? You see I have patience
 • to hear you. Can't you go on, Sir?

• I can, Madam, with *my* sufferings: Which I
 • confess ought not to be mentioned, were I at last to
 • be rewarded in the manner I hoped.

• Your *sufferings* then, if you please, Sir?

• —Affrontingly forbidden your Father's house,
 • after encouragement given, without any reasons
 • they knew not before, to justify the prohibition:
 • Forced upon a rencounter I wished to avoid, the
 • first

• first I ever, so provoked, wished to avoid : And
 • that, because the wretch was your Brother !

• Wretch, Sir !—And my Brother !—This could be
 • from no man breathing, but from him before me !

• Pardon me, Madam !—But oh ! how unworthy
 • to be your Brother !—The quarrel grafted upon an
 • old one, when at College ; he universally known to
 • be the aggressor ; and revived for views equally
 • sordid, and injurious both to yourself and me—
 • Giving life to him, who would have taken away
 • mine !

• Your *generosity* THIS, Sir ; not your sufferings :
 • A little more of your *sufferings*, if you please !—I
 • hope you do not repent, that you did not murder
 • my Brother !

• My private life hunted into ! My morals decried !
 • Some of the accusers not unfaulty !

• That's an aspersion, Sir !

• Spies set upon my conduct ! One hired to bribe
 • my own servant's fidelity ; perhaps to have poisoned
 • me at last, if the honest fellow had not—

• *Facts*, Mr. Lovelace !—Do you want facts in
 • the display of your sufferings ?—None of your *Per-*
 • *haps's*, I beseech you !

• Menaces every day, and defiance, put into
 • every one's mouth against me ! Forced to creep
 • about in disguises—and to watch *all hours*—

• And in *all weathers*, I suppose Sir—That I re-
 • member was once your grievance !—*In all wea-*
 • *thers*, Sir (a) ! And all these hardships arising
 • from yourself, not imposed by me.

• —Like a thief, or an eves-dropper, proceeded
 • he : And yet neither by birth nor alliances un-
 • worthy of *their* relation, whatever I may be and
 • am of their admirable Daughter : Of whom they,
 • every one of them, are at least *as* unworthy !—

(a) See p. 273. and 276.

• These, Madam, I call sufferings: *Justly* call so;
 • if at last I am to be sacrificed to an imperfect Re-
 • conciliation—*Imperfect*, I say: For can you ex-
 • pect to live so much as *tolerably*, under the same
 • roof, after all that is passed, with that Brother and
 • Sister?

• O Sir, Sir! What sufferings have yours been!
 • And all for my sake, I warrant!—I can never reward
 • you for them!—Never think of me more, I be-
 • seech you—How can you have patience with me?
 • —Nothing has been owing to your own behaviour,
 • I presume: Nothing to your defiance for de-
 • fiances: Nothing to your resolution declared more
 • than once, that you *would* be related to a family,
 • which, nevertheless, you would not stoop to ask a
 • Relation of: Nothing, in short, to courses which
 • every-body blamed you for, you not thinking it
 • worth your while to justify yourself. Had I not
 • thought you used in an ungentlemanly manner,
 • as I have heretofore told you, you had not had my
 • notice by pen and ink (*a*). That notice gave you
 • a supposed security, and you generously defied my
 • friends the more for it: And this brought upon
 • me (perhaps not undeservedly) my Father's dis-
 • pleasure; without which my Brother's private
 • pique, and selfish views, would have wanted a
 • foundation to build upon: So that all that fol-
 • lowed of my treatment, and your redundant *Only's*,
 • I might thank you for principally, as you may
 • yourself for all your *sufferings*, your *mighty* suffer-
 • ings!—And if, voluble Sir, you have founded any
 • merit upon them, be so good as to revoke it:
 • And look upon *me*, with my forfeited reputation,
 • as the only sufferer—For what—Pray hear me out,
 • Sir, [for he was going to speak] have you suffered
 • in, but your pride? Your reputation *could not*

(*a*) See p. 276.

• suffer:

• suffer; *That* it was beneath you to be solicitous
 • about. And had you not been an unmanageable
 • man, I should not have been driven to the extre-
 • mity I now every hour, as the hour passes, de-
 • plore—With this additional reflection upon myself,
 • that I ought not to have *begun*, or, having begun,
 • not *continued* a correspondence with one, who
 • thought it not worth his while to clear his own
 • character for *my sake*, or to submit to my Father
 • for *his own*, in a point wherein every Father ought
 • to have an option.—

• Darkness, light; Light, darkness; by my
 • Soul!—Just as you please to have it. O Charmer
 • of my heart! snatching my hand, and pressing it
 • between both his, to his lips, in a strange wild way,
 • Take me, take me to yourself: Mould me as you
 • please: I am wax in your hands: Give me your
 • own impression; and seal me for ever yours—We
 • were born for each other!—You to make me happy,
 • and save a soul—I am all error, all crime. I see
 • what I ought to have done. But do you think,
 • Madam, I can willingly consent to be sacrificed to
 • a partial Reconciliation, in which I shall be so
 • great, so irreparable a sufferer?—Any-thing but
 • *that*—Include me in your terms: Prescribe to me:
 • Promise for me as you please—Put a halter about
 • my neck, and lead me by it, upon condition of
 • forgiveness on that disgraceful penance, and of a
 • prostration as servile, to your Father's presence
 • (your Brother absent); and I will beg his consent
 • at his feet, and bear any-thing but spurning from
 • him, because he is your Father. But to give you
 • up upon *cold* conditions, D—n me (said the shock-
 • ing wretch) if I either will, or can!

• These were his words, as near as I can remember
 • them; for his behaviour was so strangely wild and
 • fervent, that I was perfectly frightened. I thought

• he would have devoured my hand. I wished myself a thousand miles distant from him.

• I told him, I by no means approved of his violent temper: He was too boisterous a man for my liking. I saw *now*, by the conversation that had passed, what was his boasted regard to my *Injunctions*; and should take my measures accordingly, as he should *soon* find. And with a half-frighted earnestness I desired him to withdraw, and leave me to myself.

• He obeyed; and that with extreme complaisance in his manner, but with his complexion greatly heightened, and a countenance as greatly dissatisfied.

• But, on recollecting all that passed, I plainly see, that he means not, if he can help it, to leave me to the liberty of refusing him; which I had nevertheless preserved a *right* to do; but looks upon me as *his*, by a strange sort of obligation, for having run away with me *against my will*.

• Yet you see he but touches upon the edges of matrimony neither. And that at a time generally, when he has either excited one's passions or apprehensions; so that one cannot at once descend. But surely this cannot be his design.—And yet such seemed to be his behaviour to my Sister (*a*), when he provoked her to refuse him, and so tamely submitted, as he did, to her refusal.—But he dare not—What can one say of so various a man?—I am now again out of conceit with him. I wish I were fairly out of his power.

• He has sent up three times to beg admittance; in the two last, with unusual earnestness. But I have sent him word I will first finish what I am about.

• What to do about going from this place, I

(*a*) See Vol. I. p. 11, 12.

cannot tell. I could stay here with all my heart; as I have said to him: The Gentlewoman and her Daughters are desirous that I will; altho' not very convenient for them, I believe, neither: But I see he will not leave me, while I do—So I *must* remove somewhere.

I have long been sick of myself: And now I am more and more so. But let me not lose your good opinion. If I do, that loss will complete the misfortunes of

• Your

CL. HARLOWE:

LETTER LXII.

Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, To Miss HOWE.

Sunday Night (April 16.)

I May send to you, altho' you are forbid to write to me; may I not?—For that is not a *cor-respondence* (Is it?) where Letters are not answered.

I am strangely at a loss what to think of this man. He is a perfect Proteus. I can but write according to the shape he assumes at the time. Don't think *me* the changeable person, I beseech you, if in one Letter I contradict what I wrote in another; nay, if I seem to contradict what I said in the same Letter: For he is a perfect chameleon; or rather more variable than the chameleon; for that, it is said, cannot assume the *red* and the *white*; but this man *can*. And tho' *black* seems to be his natural colour, yet has he taken great pains to make me think him nothing but *white*.

But you shall judge of him, as I proceed. Only, if I any-where appear to you to be credulous, I beg you to set me right: For you are a stander-by,

by, as you say in a former (a)—Would to Heaven I were not to play! For I think, after all, I am held to a desperate game. Before I could finish my last to you, he sent up twice more to beg admittance. I returned for answer, that I would see him at my own time: I would neither be invaded, nor prescribed to.

Considering how we parted, and my delaying his *audience*, as he sometimes calls it, I expected him to be in no very good humour; when I admitted of his visit; and by what I wrote, you will conclude that I was not. Yet mine soon changed, when I saw his extreme humility at his entrance, and heard what he had to say.

I have a Letter, Madam, said he, from Lady Betty Lawrance, and another from my Cousin (Charlotte.) But of these more by-and-by. I came now to make my humble acknowledgements to you, upon the arguments that passed between us so lately.

I was silent, wondering what he was driving at. I am a most unhappy creature, proceeded he: Unhappy from a strange impatience of spirit, which I cannot conquer.—It always brings upon me deserved humiliation. But it is more laudable to acknowledge, than to persevere when under the power of conviction.

I was still silent. I have been considering what you proposed to me, Madam, that I should acquiesce with such terms as you should think proper to comply with, in order to a Reconciliation with your friends.

Well, Sir. And I find all just, all right, on your side; and all impatience, all inconsideration, on mine.

(a) See Vol. I. p. 58. Also Vol. II. p. 305.

• I stared, you may suppose. Whence this change, Sir? And so soon?

• I am so much convinced, that you must be in the right in all you think fit to insist upon, that I shall for the future mistrust myself; and, if it be possible, whenever I differ with you, take an hour's time for recollection, before I give way to that vehemence, which an opposition, to which I have not been accustomed, too often gives me.

• All this is mighty good, Sir: But to what does it tend?

• Why, Madam, when I came to consider what you had proposed, as to the terms of Reconciliation with your friends; and when I recollected, that you had always *referred to yourself to approve or reject* me, according to my *merits or demerits*; I plainly saw, that it was rather a *condescension* in you, that you were pleased to ask my consent to those terms, than that you were imposing a *new Law*: And I now, Madam, beg your pardon for my impatience: Whatever terms you think proper to come into with your Relations, which will enable you to honour me with the *conditional* effect of your promise to me, these be pleased to consent to: And if I lose you, insupportable as that thought is to me; yet, as it must be by my own fault, I ought to thank myself for it.

• What think you, Miss Howe?—Do you believe he can have any view in this?—I cannot see any he could have; and I thought it best, as he put it in so right a manner, to appear not to doubt the sincerity of his confession, and to accept of it, as sincere.

• He then read to me part of Lady Betty's Letter; turning down the beginning, which was a little too severe upon him, he said, for my eye: And I believe,

lieve, by the stile, the remainder of it was in a *corrective* strain.

It was too plain, I told him, that he must have great faults, that none of his Relations could write to him, but with mingled censure for some bad action.

And it is as plain, my dearest creature, said he, that you, who know not of any such faults, but by surmise, are equally ready to condemn me.— Will not charity allow you to infer, that *their* charges are no better grounded?—And that my principal fault has been carelessness of my character, and too little solicitude to clear myself, when aspersed? Which I do assure you, is the case.

Lady Betty, in her Letter, expresses herself in the most obliging manner, in relation to me. ‘ She wishes him so to behave, as to encourage me to make him soon happy. She desires her compliments to me; and expresses her impatience to see, as her Niece, so *celebrated a Lady* [Those are her high words]. She shall take it for an honour, she says, to be put into a way to oblige me. She hopes I will not too long delay the Ceremony; because That performed, will be to her, and to Lord M. and Lady Sarah, a sure pledge of her Nephew’s merits, and good behaviour.’

She says, ‘ She was always sorry to hear of the hardships I had met with on his account. That he will be the most ingrateful of men, if he make not *all up* to me: And that she thinks it incumbent upon all their family to supply to me the lost favour of my own: And, for her part, nothing of that kind, she bids him assure me, shall be wanting.’

Her Ladyship observes, ‘ That the treatment he had received from my family, would have been
‘ more

‘ more unaccountable than it was, with such natural
 ‘ and accidental advantages as he had, had it not
 ‘ been owing to his own careless manners. But she
 ‘ hopes, that he will convince the Harlowe-family,
 ‘ that they had thought worse of him than he had
 ‘ deserved ; since now it was in his power to establish
 ‘ his character for ever. This she prays God to en-
 ‘ able him to do, as well for his own honour, as for
 ‘ the honour of their *house*,’ was the magnificent
 word.

She concludes, with ‘ desiring to be informed of
 ‘ our Nuptials the moment they are celebrated, that
 ‘ she may be with the earliest in felicitating me on
 ‘ the happy occasion.’

But her Ladyship gives me no direct invitation to
 attend her before Marriage : Which I might have ex-
 pected from what he had told me.

He then shewed me part of Miss Montague’s more
 sprightly Letter, ‘ congratulating him upon the ho-
 ‘ nour he had obtained, of the *confidence of so admi-
 ‘ rable a Lady*.’ Those are her words. *Confidence*,
 my dear ! Nobody, indeed, as you say, will believe
 otherwise, were they to be told the truth : And you
 see, that Miss Montague (and all his family, I sup-
 pose) think the step I have taken, an *extraordinary*
 one. ‘ *She* also wishes for his speedy nuptials ; and
 ‘ to see her new Cousin at M. Hall : As do Lord
 ‘ M. she tells him, and her Sister ; and in general
 ‘ all the well-wishers of their family.

‘ Whenever his happy day shall be passed, she pro-
 ‘ poses, she says, to attend me, and to make one in
 ‘ my train to M. Hall, if his Lordship shall continue
 ‘ as ill of the gout as he is at present. But that should
 ‘ he get better, he will himself attend me, she is sure,
 ‘ and conduct me thither : And afterwards quit either
 ‘ of his three seats to us, till we shall be settled to our
 ‘ mind.’

This

This young Lady says nothing in excuse for not meeting me on the road, or at St. Albans, as he had made me expect she would: Yet mentions *her having been indisposed*. Mr. Lovelace had also told me, that Lord M. *was ill of the gout*; which Miss Montague's Letter confirms.

But why did not the man shew me these Letters last night? Was he afraid of giving me too much pleasure?

END of VOL. II.



CONTENTS of VOL. II.

Lett.

I. *CLARISSA, To Miss Howe.* She tells her, that the proposal she had made to her Relations, on which she had built so much, is rejected. Betty's saucy report upon it. Her Brother's provoking Letter to her. Her Letter to her Uncle Harlowe on the occasion. Substance of a Letter excusatory from Mr. Lovelace. He presses for an interview with her in the garden.

II. *From the same.* Her Uncle's angry Answer. Substance of an humble Letter from Mr. Lovelace. He has got a violent cold and hoarseness by his fruitless attendance all night in the coppice. *She is sorry he is not well.* Makes a conditional appointment with him for the next night, in the garden. *Hates tyranny in all shapes.*

III. *From the same.* A characteristic dialogue with the pert Betty Barnes. Women have great advantage over men in all the powers that relate to the imagination. Makes a request to her Uncle Harlowe, which is granted, on condition that she will admit of a visit from Solmes. She complies; and appoints that day sevensnight. Then writes to Lovelace to suspend the intended Interview. Desires Miss Howe to enquire into Lovelace's behaviour at the little Inn he puts up at in his Way to Harlowe Place.

IV. *From the same.* Receives a Letter from Mr. Lovelace, written in very high Terms, on her suspending the Interview. Her angry Answer. Resolves against any further correspondence with him.

V. *Miss Howe, To Clarissa.* Humorous account of her Mother and Mr. Hickman in their little journey to visit her dying Cousin. Railles her on her present displeasure with Lovelace.

VI. *Mrs. Hickman, To Miss Howe.* Resenting Miss Howe's treatment of him.

VII. *Mrs. Howe, In Answer.*

VIII.

- VIII. *Miss Howe, To Clarissa.* Observes upon the contents of her seven last Letters. Advises her to send to her all the Letters and Papers she would not have her Relations see; also a parcel of cloaths, linen, &c. Is in hopes of procuring an asylum for her with her Mother, if things come to extremity.
- IX. *Clarissa, To Miss Howe.* Requisites of true satire. Rejoices in the hopes she gives her of her Mother's protection. Deposits a parcel of linen, and all Lovelace's Letters. Useful observations relating to family-management, and to neatness of person and dress. Her contrivances to amuse Betty Barnes.
- X. *Miss Howe, To Clarissa.* Result of her inquiry after Lovelace's behaviour at the Inn. Doubts not but he has ruined the Innkeeper's Daughter. Passionately inveighs against him.
- XI. *Clarissa in Answer.* Is extremely alarmed at Lovelace's supposed baseness. Declares her abhorrence of him.
- XII. *Miss Howe, To Clarissa.* Lovelace, on enquiry, she tells her, comes out to be not only innocent with regard to his Rosebud, but generous. Miss Howe raillies her on the effects this intelligence must have upon her generosity.
- XIII. *Clarissa in Reply.* Acknowledges her generosity engaged in his favour. Frankly expresses tenderness and regard for him; and owns, that the intelligence of his supposed baseness had affected her more than she thinks it ought. Contents of a Letter she has received from him. Pities him. Writes to him, that her rejection of Solmes is not in favour to himself; for that she is determined to hold herself free to obey her Parents (as she had offered to them) if they insisted on her renouncing him, as a condition of their giving up Solmes. Reproaches him for his libertine declarations in all companies against Matrimony. Her notions of filial duty, notwithstanding the persecutions she meets with.
- XIV. *Miss Howe, To Clarissa.* Her treatment of Mr. Hickman on his intrusion into her company. Applauds Clarissa for the generosity of her spirit, and the greatness of her mind.

XV.

XV. *Clarissa, To Miss Howe.* Dr. Lewen makes her a formal visit. Affected civility of her Brother and Sister to her. Is visited by her Uncle Harlowe : And by her Sister. She penetrates the low art designed in this change of their outward behaviour. Substance of Lovelace's reply to her last. He acknowledges his folly for having ever spoken lightly of Matrimony.

XVI. *From the same.* Another Letter from Mr. Lovelace ; in which he expresses himself extremely apprehensive of the issue of her Interview with Solmes. Presses her to escape ; *proposes means for effecting it* ; and threatens to rescue her by violence, if they attempt to carry her to her Uncle Antony's against her will. Her terror on this occasion. She insists, in her answer, on his forbearing to take any rash step ; and expresses herself highly dissatisfied, *that he should presume upon such an interest in her esteem, as to think himself intitled to dispute her Father's authority in removing her to her Uncle's.* She relies on Mrs. Howe's protection till her Cousin Morden arrives.

XVII. *From the same.* A visit from her Aunt Hervey, preparative to the approaching Interview with Solmes. Her Aunt tells her what is expected on her having consented to that Interview.

XVIII. XIX. *From the same.* A particular account of what passed in the Interview with Solmes ; and of the parts occasionally taken in it by her boistrous Uncle, by her brutal Brother, by her implacable Sister, and by her qualifying Aunt. Her perseverance and distress. Her Cousin Dolly's tenderness for her. Her closet searched for papers.—All the pens and ink they find taken from her.

XX. *From the same.* Substance of a Letter from Lovelace. His proposals, promises, and declarations. All her present wish is, *to be able to escape Solmes*, on the one hand, and to avoid incurring the *disgrace of refusing with the family of a man at enmity with her own*, on the other. Her emotions behind the yew-hedge on seeing her Father going into the garden. Grieved at what she hears him say. Dutiful message to her Mother. Harshly answered. She censures Mr. Lovelace for his rash threatenings to rescue her. *Justifies her friends for resenting them, and condemns herself for corresponding with him at first.*

418 CONTENTS of VOL. II.

- XXI. *Miss Howe, To Clarissa.* Is vexed at the heart to be obliged to tell her, that her Mother refuses to receive and protect her. Offers to go away privately with her.
- XXII. *Clarissa, To Miss Howe.* Her disinterested arguments in Mrs. Howe's favour, on her refusal to receive her. All her consolation, that her unhappy situation is not owing to her own inadvertence or folly. Is afraid she is singled out either for her own faults, or for those of her family, or perhaps for the faults of both, to be a very unhappy creature. *Justifies the ways of Providence, let what will befall her*; and argues with exemplary greatness of mind on this subject. Warmly discourages Miss Howe's motion to accompany her in her flight.
- XXIII. *From the same.* Further instances of her impartiality in condemning Lovelace, and reasoning for her Parents. Overhears her Brother and Sister exulting in the success of their schemes; and undertaking, *the one to keep his Father up to his resentment on occasion of Lovelace's menaces, the other her Mother.* Exasperated at this, and at what her Aunt Hervey tells her, she writes to Lovelace, *that she will meet him the following Monday,* and throw herself into the protection of the Ladies of his family.
- XXIV. *From the same.* Her frightful dream. Now, that Lovelace has got her Letter, she repents her appointment.
- XXV. *From the same.* Receives a Letter from Mr. Lovelace, full of transport, vows, and promises. He presumes upon her being his on her getting away, *tho' she has not given him room for such hopes.* In her Answer she tells him, 'That she looks not upon herself as absolutely bound by her appointment: That there are many points to be adjusted between them (were she to leave her Father's house) before she can give him particular encouragement: That he must expect she will do her utmost to procure a Reconciliation with her Father, and his approbation of her future steps.' All her friends are to be assembled on the following Wednesday: She is to be brought before them: How to be proceeded with. Lovelace, in his Reply, asks pardon for writing to her with so much assurance; and declares his entire acquiescence with her will and pleasure.

CONTENTS of VOL. II. 419

XXVI. *Clarissa, To Miss Howe.* Confirms her appointment; but tells him what *he is*, and what *he is not*, to expect. Promises, *that if she should change her mind as to withdrawing, she will take the first opportunity to see him, and acquaint him with her reasons.* Reflections on what she has done. Her deep regrets to be thus driven.

XXVII. *Miss Howe, To Clarissa.* Reasons why she ought to allow her to accompany her in her flight. Punctilio at an end, the moment she is out of her Father's house. *Requisites of friendship.* Questions, Whether she will not rather chuse to go off with one of her own Sex, than with Lovelace? And if not, Whether she should not marry him as soon as possible?

XXVIII. *Clarissa, To Miss Howe* [Miss Howe's last not received]. Lovelace promises compliance *in every article with her pleasure.* Her heart misgives her notwithstanding. She knows not but she may yet recede.

XXIX. *From the same. In Answer to Letter xxvii.* Reflections worthy of herself on some of the passages in Miss Howe's last Letter. Gives her home-put questions a full consideration; and determines *NOT to withdraw with Lovelace.*

XXX. XXXI. *From the same.* Substance of her Letter to Lovelace, revoking her appointment. Thinks herself obliged (her Letters being not taken away) as well by promise as in order to *prevent mischief*, to meet him, and to give him her reasons for revoking. — The hour of meeting now at hand, she is apprehensive of the contest she shall have with him, on her refusing to go off with him, as he will come with a different expectation.

XXXII. *From the same. DATED FROM ST. ALBANS.* Writes, in the utmost anguish of mind, for the little parcel of linen she had sent to her with far better hopes. Condemns her own rashness in meeting Lovelace. Begs her pity and her prayers.

XXXIII. *Miss Howe. In Answer.* Is astonished, confounded, aghast. Repeats her advice to marry Lovelace.

XXXIV. *Clarissa, To Miss Howe.* Gives a particular account of her meeting Lovelace; of her vehement contention with him; and, at last, of her being terrified out of her predetermined resolution, and tricked away.

420 CONTENTS of VOL. II.

Her grief, and compunction of heart, upon it. Lays all to the fault of corresponding with him at first *against paternal prohibition*. Is incensed against him for his artful dealings with her, and for his selfish Love.

XXXV. *Mr. Lovelace, To Joseph Leman*. A Letter which lays open the whole of his contrivance to get off Clarissa.

XXXVI. *Joseph Leman*. In Answer.

XXXVII. *Lovelace, To Belford*. In ecstasy on the success of his contrivances. Well as he loves her, he would shew her no mercy, if he thought she preferred any man living to him. Will religiously observe the INJUNCTIONS she laid upon him previous to their meeting.

XXXVIII. *Clarissa, To Miss Howe*. A recriminating conversation between her and Lovelace. He reminds her of her *Injunctions*; and, instead of beseeching her to dispense with them, promises a sacred regard to them. It is not therefore *in her power*, she tells Miss Howe, to take her advice as to speedy marriage. [A Note on the place, justifying her conduct, p. 274.] Chuses *not to go to any of his Relations*. And why. Is attended by Mrs. Greme, Lord M's housekeeper at the Lawn, who waits on her to her Sister Sorlings, with whom she consents to lodge. *His looks offend her*. Has written to her Sister for her cloaths.

XXXIX. *Lovelace, To Belford*. Gives briefly the particulars of his success. Describes her person and dress on her first meeting him. Extravagant exultation. Makes Belford question him on the honour of his designs by her. And answers doubtfully.

XL. *Miss Howe, To Clarissa*. Her sentiments on her narrative. Her Mother, at the instigation of Antony Harlowe, forbids their correspondence. Mr. Hickman's zeal to serve them in it. What her family now pretend, if she had not left them. How they took her supposed projected flight. Offers her money and cloaths. Would have her seem to place some little confidence in Lovelace. *Her Brother and Sister will not permit her Father and Uncles to cool*.

XLI. XLII. *Clarissa, To Miss Howe*. Advises her to obey her Mother, who prohibits their correspondence. Declines to accept of her offers of money; And why. *Mr. Lovelace*

CONTENTS of VOL. II. 421

lace not a polite man. She will be as ready to place a confidence in him, as he will be to deserve it: Yet, tricked away by him as she was, cannot immediately treat him with great complaisance. Blames her for her liveness to her Mother — Incloses the copy of her Letter to her Sister.

XLIII. *Lovelace, To Belford.* Prides himself in his arts in the conversations between them. *Is alarmed at the superiority of her talents.* Considers opposition and resistance as a challenge to do his worst. His artful proceedings with Joseph Leman.

XLIV. *From the same.* Men need only be known to be Rakes, he says, to recommend themselves to the favour of the Sex. Wishes Miss Howe were not so well acquainted with Clarissa: And why.

XLV. *From the same.* Intends to set old Antony at Mrs. Howe, to prevent the correspondence between the young Ladies. *Girl, not Gold, his predominant passion.* Raillies Belford on his person and appearance. Takes humorous notice of the two daughters of the Widow Sorlings.

XLVI. *From the same.* Further triumph over the Harlowes. Similitude of the Spider and Fly. Is for having separate Churches as well as separate Boarding-schools for the Sexes. The women ought to love him, he says; and why. *Prides himself that they do.*

XLVII. *Clarissa, To Miss Howe.* Particulars of an angry conference with Lovelace. *Seeing her sincerely displeased,* he begs the Ceremony may immediately pass. He construes her bashful silence into anger, and revows a sacred regard to her Injunctions.

XLVIII. XLIX. L. *Lovelace, To Belford.* The pleasures of a difficult chace. Triumphs in the distress and perplexity he gave her, by his artful and parading offer of Marriage — His reasonings for and against doing her justice. *Resolves to try her to the utmost.* The honour of the whole Sex concerned in the issue of her trial. *Matrimony, he sees, is in his power, now she is.*

LI. *Miss Howe, To Clarissa.* Will not obey her Mother in her prohibition of their correspondence: And why. Is charmed with her spirit.

LII. *Clarissa, To Miss Howe.* Knows not what she can do with Lovelace. He may thank himself for the trouble he has had on her account. *Did she ever, she asks, make him any promises? Did she ever receive him as a Lover?*

LIII.

- LIII. LIV. *From the same.* She calls upon Lovelace to give her a faithful account of the noises and voices she heard at the garden-door, which frightened her away with him. His confession and daring hints in relation to Solmes, and her Brother, and Betty Barnes. She is terrified.
- LV. *Lovelace, To Belford.* Rejoices in the stupidity of the Harlowes. Exults in his capacity for mischief. The condescensions to which he intends to bring the Lady. Libertine observations to the disadvantage of women; which may serve as Cautions to the Sex.
- LVI. *Clarissa, To Miss Howe.* A conversation with Mr. Lovelace wholly agreeable. His promises of Reformation. She remembers to his advantage his generosity to his Rosebud and his Tenants. Writes to her Aunt Hervey.
- LVII. LVIII. *Lovelace, To Belford.* His acknowledged vanity. Accounts for his plausible behaviour, and specious promises and proposals. Apprehensive of the correspondence between Miss Howe and Clarissa. Loves to plague him with out-of-the-way words and phrases.
- LIX. *Miss Howe, To Clarissa.* How to judge of Lovelace's specious proposals and promises. Hickman devoted to their service. Yet she treats him with ridicule.
- LX. *Clarissa, To Miss Howe.* Lovelace complains, she hears, to Mrs. Greeme, of her adhering to her Injunctions. What means he by it, she asks, yet forego such opportunities as he has had? She is punished for her vanity in hoping to be an example. Blames Miss Howe for her behaviour to Hickman.
- LXI. *Clarissa, To Miss Howe.* Warm dialogues with Lovelace. She is displeased with him for his affectedly bashful hints of matrimony. Mutual recriminations. He looks upon her as his, she says, by a strange sort of obligation, for having run away with her against her will. Yet but touches on the edges of matrimony neither. She is sick of herself.
- LXII. *From the same.* Mr. Lovelace a perfect Proteus. He now applauds her for that treatment of him, which before he had resented; and communicates to her two Letters, one from Lady Betty Lawrance, the other from Miss Montague. She wonders that he did not produce those Letters before, as he must know they would be highly acceptable to her.

18 JUL 70

